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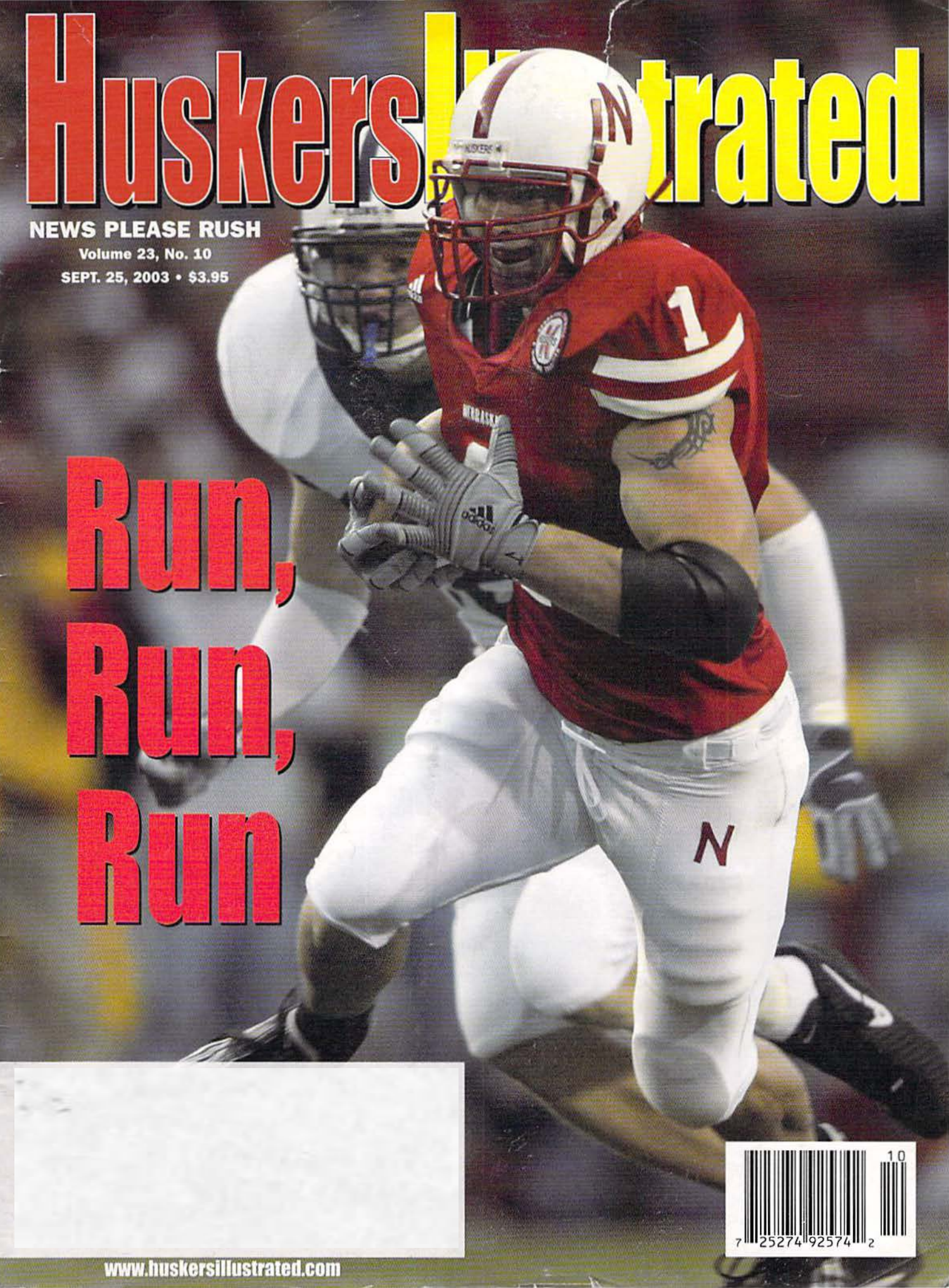

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FROM THE EDITOR

Good Enough?

It wasn't pretty, but the Huskers are 3-0

Brian HILL

"JUST WIN, BABY!"

That old rallying cry of the Oakland Raiders seems to be fitting for the 2003 Cornhuskers. It doesn't appear that this team's wins will be pretty, but . . .

Nebraska attempted just six passes in 78 plays and scored just one touchdown in six trips inside the red zone, but the Husker defense came up with another second half shutout, and the result was an 18-10 victory over Penn State.

Will that type of performance continue to translate into victories? Who knows? But there were plenty of good signs in win No. 3.

The only touchdown drive was vintage Nebraska.

Trailing 10-9 at intermission, the Huskers took the second half kickoff 80 yards in 16 plays, all runs. Even more impressive, the drive consumed more than eight minutes. Penn State had the football just once, for five plays, in the third quarter.

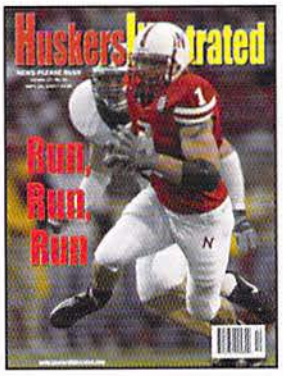
After three games, Nebraska's average time of possession is 38:17, compared to 21:43 for its opponents. Granted, all that has translated into just five touchdowns (and nine field goals), but the ball control by the offense has certainly been a key factor in the greatly improved performance by the defense.

The Huskers have allowed just 24 points, and they gave up their first rushing touchdown in the Penn State game. They have limited opponents to averages of 63.3 yards rushing and 208 yards in total offense.

The Blackshirts also have 10 takeaways, almost half of the number (21) they produced all last season. No. 10 may have been the most important so far.

With Nebraska holding a precarious 15-10 lead, the Nittany Lions were driving midway through the fourth quarter. On a first down play from midfield, quarterback Zack Mills fumbled, and Husker middle linebacker Barrett Ruud recovered with 6:49 remaining. That led to a field goal and the final eight-point margin.

Ruud is one of 12 former Lincoln Southeast players on the Nebraska roster. That "Southeast Connection" is the focus of our feature story in this edition of Huskers Illustrated.



The subject of our player profile is wide receiver Tim Liley, who turned down a track scholarship at Kansas to walk on at Nebraska. This week's installment of "Where Are They Now" takes a look at former Husker defensive tackle Rod Horn, who walked away after two years (including a Super Bowl appearance) in the NFL to go on with his career goal.

The 2003 Huskers have a slight break before their first road trip and a Thursday night ESPN game against Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. M.M. Roberts Stadium may hold just 33,000, but "The Rock" is regarded as a difficult place to play, and a record crowd is expected.

The Golden Eagles may not have a quarterback the caliber of 1990 alum Brett Favre, but they do have a tough defense, including All-America linebacker Rod Davis.

After last year's road woes — a 1-5 record away from Memorial Stadium — it will be interesting to see how this Nebraska team reacts to its first journey. After the road trip, the Huskers return home to face Troy State, so if they can pass the first road test, it'll be 5-0 heading to Missouri Oct. 11.

It probably won't be pretty, but they all count the same. ■

ON THE COVER

Senior I-back Josh Davis was the workhorse for the Nebraska offense with 32 carries for a career-high 179 yards in an 18-10 victory over Penn State. *Photo by Scott Bruhn.*

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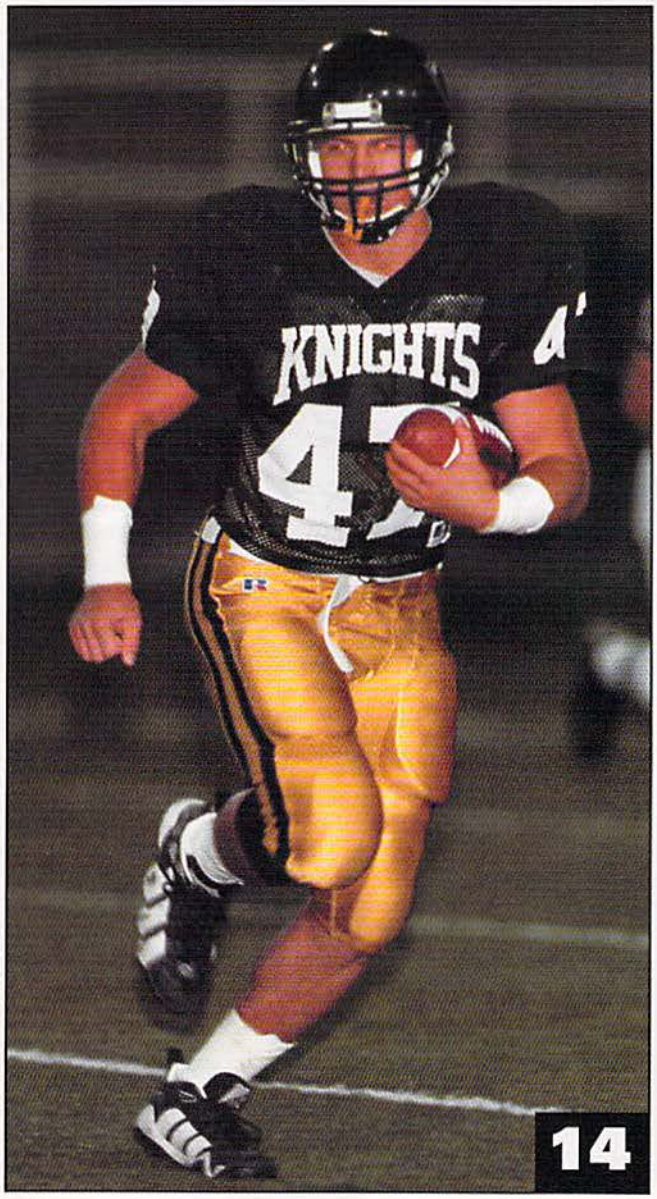

14 All Knights

Barrett Ruud (above as a senior at Lincoln Southeast in 2000) is one of 12 former Knights on the Nebraska roster this season. *By Mike Babcock*

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The Southern Miss. review/Troy State preview edition will be mailed Sept. 29 Check for updates at huskersillustrated.com.

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It's a Snap

When the letter came a couple of days before the start of preseason practice, Lane Kelly thought nothing of it. He figured every football player received one. But he was the only walk-on to get the letter, which congratulated him on being among the 105 to report for preseason practice.

"I thought it was just telling me what the team was doing," Kelly said on the Tuesday following the Oklahoma State game. After Monday's practice, he had moved to the varsity locker room.

Barely a month earlier, he had expected to report with the rest of the walk-ons on the first day of classes. And now he had relocated from the north field house to the South Stadium, along with several scholarship freshmen, among them Andy Birkel, Brandon Teamer and Bo Ruud.

Moving from one place to the other "was a pretty big honor," said Kelly.

In fact, the entire experience was overwhelming for the freshman from Omaha Creighton Prep. Not only had he suited up for the opener, he had played, snapping for extra points and field goals.

He had difficulty finding words. "It's awesome. It's just like living a dream. That's all I can say. I've always dreamed of doing that but never thought I could. It's the best thing ever," he said.

Lane Kelly was among the 105 players reporting for preseason practice.

Kelly should be accustomed to unusual twists of football fate. He had never done any snapping until his freshman year at Creighton Prep, when he stayed after practice one day at the urging of a friend. Coach Tom Jaworski was looking for a backup deep-snapper, and Kelly decided to give it a try.

"It was like a freak thing," he says. "I didn't think I could do it."

But he did it well enough that Jaworski promoted him to the varsity. The next season he became the deep-snapper, in addition to playing tight end and defensive end.

He is listed as a defensive end, and "we'll eventually work him at a position such as that," Coach Frank Solich says. "But right now, he'll be our short snapper."

He also is working on long snapping. "You hope to get a guy early on like Lane, who can do it for three or four years," says Jeff Jamrog, who works with the special teams.

Former Cornhusker John Garrison played as a true freshman because he could long snap. Garrison was recruited as a rush end but moved to the offensive line and became a center.

Kelly doesn't mind focusing on snapping, which is more demanding than it was in high school. Long snapping, for example, requires him to drop back as a blocker after releasing the ball.

"It's a long process," he says. "You can't just learn it in one day."

He also needs to get bigger and stronger, so he is "hitting the weights."

That the 6-foot-4, 235-pound Kelly is a good athlete "makes the situation even better," Jamrog says. "A guy has some length like he does, and he'll put on weight in our program so that he can go down there and make a tackle. But first and foremost is the perfect snap."

Nebraska began recruiting him as a snapper prior to his senior year at Creighton Prep, after he attended the Big Red summer camp. He had attended the camp the previous summer but hadn't done any snapping. Then former Cornhusker coach Dan Young discovered he could snap.

Former Cornhusker Adam Treu utilized his deep-snapping skills to earn a job with the NFL's Oakland Raiders, and that's the model Kelly would like to follow. "If everything works out the way I want it to and I get bigger, that's the ticket to the NFL, if I work hard at it," he says.

A lot would need to happen between now and then. But his is an unusual story already.

"If dads are smart, that's one trade your son can get a scholarship and go on and play at the pro level as a big-time snapper," Jamrog says. "There are some games lost on snaps."

Kelly doesn't have a scholarship yet, of course. But he isn't complaining.

Even after he played in the opener, he didn't expect to move to the varsity locker room until next fall. "It's a pretty big honor, I think, as a freshman walk-on," he says. And so it is. ■

Freshmen Walk-Ons

Note: The 2003 Nebraska roster includes at least 27 freshmen walk-ons:

Name	Pos.	Hometown (high school)
Matt Ankerson	TE	Hickman, Neb. (Norris)
Aaron Burbach	OL	Dyersville, Iowa
Ben Eisenhart	DB	Culbertson, Neb.
Dan Erickson	WR	Omaha (Papillion-La Vista)
Travis Gingery	DB	Lincoln, Neb. (East)
Sean Hill	TE	Lisle, Ill. (Naperville North)
Brian Hohlen	TE	Juniata, Neb. (Adams Central)
Jeret Johnson	PK	Phoenix, Ariz. (Arcadia)
Patrick Johnson	TE	Tempe, Ariz. (Corono del Sol)
Lane Kelly	DE/LS	Omaha (Creighton Prep)
Tyler Kester	P	Clearwater, Neb.
Chris LeFlore	WR	Omaha (Central)
Eric Lueshan	PK	Pierce, Neb.
Kevin Luhrs	DE	Omaha (Creighton Prep)
Zach Miller	QB	Weston, Neb. (Bish. Neumann)
Matt Mulllen	OL	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
Jared Nielson	PK	St. Paul, Neb.
Charlie Peacock	OL	Omaha (Millard North)
Jake Peetz	ATH	O'Neill, Neb. (St. Mary's)
Andy Poulosky	DE	Ponca, Neb.
Thomas Rice	DE	Lincoln, Neb. (East)
Andy Sand	TE	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
Michael Shada	WR	Wahoo, Neb.
Scott Siegel	FB	Grand Island, Neb.
Jeff Speichinger	OL	Malmo, Neb. (Bish. Neumann)
Tony Sullivan	DE	Wahoo, Neb. (Bish. Neumann)
Clayton Thor	OL	Norfolk, Neb. (Catholic)

RYAN REDSHIRTS

Ryan Schuler would have played as a true freshman this season. Coach Frank Solich indicated that at the beginning of preseason practice. But the 6-foot-7, 280-pound offensive lineman from Sioux Falls, S.D., is being held out as a redshirt because of unspecified medical reasons.

Newspaper speculation has been that the recurrence of a blood-clot problem sidelined Schuler, who is running and lifting but hasn't been cleared to participate in contact work.

Whatever the medical situation, it apparently occurred soon after the start of practice because Schuler was among six newcomers whom reporters were allowed to interview the first three days.

The physically imposing freshman admitted that he was facing "a huge learning curve, trying to pick up the offense. You go as hard as you can," he said. "But you still mess up."

Ryan Schuler

As a result, he seemed ambivalent about redshirting. "I was confident enough in my skills that if I needed a redshirt season, I'd get one. And if I could come in and play right away that would be the case," said Schuler, who initially committed to Oklahoma before changing his mind late.

The Sooners indicated that he would start out on the two-deeps, "which is scary as hell coming in as a freshman in the Big 12, one of the toughest conferences in the country," he said. "If a guy goes down the first day of practice, 'OK, true freshman, you're starting now.'

"That seems like a little too much pressure to handle."

Schuler, who also considered Iowa and Colorado among his final choices, changed his mind about Oklahoma, in part, because of offensive coordinator and line coach Barney Cotton, with whom there was an immediate connection. "He was one of the main reasons I came here," Schuler said.

"People definitely make the place. I mean, all those places have money and nice facilities. But people make it worth your while. You've got to look at what kind of people you're going to be around because you want to be a good person coming out of the program, not just a better athlete."

Schuler had the skills and physical and emotional maturity to contribute immediately.

"We were counting on him being in the mix of things at the tackle spot and definitely counting on him to play a back-up role," Solich said after a late-August practice. "That is a little bit of a blow to us.

"But we're hoping he'll be able to bounce back off this eventually." ■

QUICK HITS

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

NOT QUITE AS QUIET

Demorrio Williams still isn't the most talkative Cornhusker. But he's much more willing to voice an opinion now than he was last season. His selection as a captain is evidence of that.

The senior weakside linebacker's initial hesitancy to speak up was a result of his transfer from Kilgore (Texas) Junior College. "A guy that just comes here and tries to say something? He doesn't know anything about the program," Williams says. "So I just kind of got back out of the way."

But "like the coaches said, when you're out there playing, making plays, you should have the right to say something. So as spring (practice) came this year, I said, 'Hey, man, this is it for you. You can't let this year pass by.' So I thought I needed to step up." And speak up when the need arises.

SIGNIFICANT STAT

The difference between starting at your own 20-yard line and, say, your own 35 is more significant, percentage-wise, than 15 yards. The likelihood of scoring goes up in direct proportion to where on the field a team's possession begins. That's why starting field position is a "real heavy statistic in terms of how things are going for you," Coach Frank Solich says. "We look at that very carefully."

He pointed out the importance of starting field position by referring to previous Nebraska teams. The 1995 national champions had "a little over a 12-yard advantage" compared to opponents, while the 1997 national champs had "a little bit over at 14-yard advantage," he says.

On average, his Big 12 champs in 1999 took possession 12 yards farther up field than opponents. "Usually what that adds up to is that you aren't getting beat in any phase of the game," he says.

The kicking teams are critical in establishing field position, which is why he puts "the best people on the field" for special teams. "Sometimes, it depends on where your depth is," he says.

For instance, "if you're using linebackers, if your second-team guy can come in and spell a linebacker some snaps, you may choose to spell him there versus (on) special teams. That's how important special teams can be. So we'll work at having all our best athletes on the field for special teams."

WHATEVER THE COLOR

Defensive end Benard Thomas was pleased to earn a Blackshirt for the first time, the week before the opener against Oklahoma State. But the color wasn't as important as what it represented.

"Being a starter, that's the most important thing to me," he says. "Man, first I was like, 'OK.' Then I was like, 'I don't care if I get a black shirt, a gray shirt, a yellow shirt.' I just want to start. I want to be on the field first and last. I want to be the guy that gets the most playing time."

The junior from East Palo Alto, Calif., didn't know anything about the Blackshirt tradition before he got to Nebraska. For that matter, he didn't know anything about Cornhusker football. All he knew was, "if you start, you get a Blackshirt," he says. "I've been here for a minute and they pump up what a Blackshirt is, what it means to be a Blackshirt. 'I can get used to this. It sounds all right to me.' "

However, the practice jersey he earned "could have been doo-doo brown."

SORT OF LIKE GOLF

Scott Downing, the tight ends and kicking coach, compares kicking to swinging a golf club.

"There are certain fundamentals in a golf swing that are non-negotiable, but there are different ways to get there," he says. "We'd all like to have Tiger Woods' golf swing, but there are other guys that win golf tournaments that don't look nearly the same as Tiger Woods."

Likewise, "there is more than one way to kick a football," he says.

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

Tony Davis was justifiably proud of his son Josh after Josh was named the starter at I-back prior to the Oklahoma State game. Tony also played I-back at Nebraska, as well as fullback. But he was a different type of runner. "He had to run over people," says Josh.

"There was a reason his name was 'Tough Tony.' "

Josh is tough, too. No one questions that. In addition to playing I-back, he returns kickoffs and punts. But his dad reminds him that he is quick enough to run around defenders.

JUST A LITTLE HOLDING, PLEASE

Holding penalties are inevitable for offensive linemen. Cornhusker offensive coordinator and line coach Barney Cotton understands that. He played offensive line at Nebraska and in the NFL. "You're going to get a holding occasionally, and we'll take those," he says, "as long as it isn't very many." ■

Hard Work Rewarded

Davis, other running backs took new position coach at his word

Mike BABCOCK

TALK TO TIM ALBIN long enough about coaching, and he'll mention the break-up of the telephone company, "Ma Bell," as he refers to it. He uses the break-up as a metaphor.

"They don't have a monopoly on the phone anymore," he says with characteristic enthusiasm. "The competition, it's great. Hey, that's what this whole country is based on."

And it's also a precept of his coaching philosophy. Good things come from competition.

When Albin succeeded Dave Gillespie as running backs coach, he made it clear that competition, not past performance, would determine who started. That was understood.

"I never had to say, 'This thing's wide open.' I just told them, 'Look, here's the situation. This is how I see it.' And those guys have come out and responded very, very well," says Albin.

"They needed no extra push from me."

He attributes that to the work ethic established under Gillespie. "I want you to say this because I mean it," he says. "Those guys are schooled up. I've inherited very well drilled running backs.

"I'm just trying to get them motivated and go from there."

The motivation comes from competition, and a belief that hard work will be rewarded.

Tim Albin joined the staff after 3 years as a graduate assistant.

Albin "told us no spots are going to be solidified. Nothing is set in stone," says Josh Davis, who earned his first career start at I-back in the opener against Oklahoma State.

Davis and the other running backs took Albin at his word.

As a fifth-year senior, Davis could have been skeptical of such an assurance. He was listed second on the preseason depth chart, sharing with Cory Ross, behind David Horne, both sophomores.

Horne was taken out of a redshirt five games into last season and responded by finishing as the team's third-leading rusher, with 651 yards and seven touchdowns on 127 carries. He emerged from spring practice atop the depth chart, and began there for two-a-day practices in August.

"No one took the spot from him," Albin says. Until preseason practice.

Davis earned the start because he "had a better fall camp," says Albin.

"It wasn't given to him because he was a senior. It was not given to him because his dad was an I-back here. He has earned the spot off his performance. That's how it should be. That's how it's always been. And that's how it's going to be while I'm around here."

That has been a significant element of Nebraska's success over the years, players pushing each other, competing for positions on the depth chart. Previous contributions deserve some consideration, of course. But the bottom line is what a player has done lately. It has to be that way.

Such an approach can seem impersonal, with the potential for communication to break down. And if it does, there can be problems. "Communication is the key to anything," Albin says.

"I don't care what field you're in, business, coaching, education, you can list the fields. You have got to be a communicator. You can't always be a talker. You have to be a listener.

"I'm not saying I'm the master. I'm just saying those are the key ingredients."

Davis started the first two games, but there were no guarantees beyond that. "I know David and Cory both think of themselves as starting I-backs, and rightfully so," says offensive coordinator Barney Cotton. "I don't have a crystal ball, but this competition should remain fierce throughout the season."

Competition is "what has made them all three better," Cotton says.

It certainly made Davis better, during the off-season as well as in fall camp.

As a senior, this is his last go-around, and he approached it that way. "I tried not to think I would get anything just handed to me," he says. "That's how the majority of guys on our team think. You've got to go out there and expect you're in the run every time, no matter what position you're going for.

"You can't really control what all happens. The only thing you really have control over is how hard you work. That's something I've been taught growing up. It's something I've tried to do."

During preseason practice, Davis had "a real professional, business-like attitude," says Cotton. He reported in "great shape" and was "no-nonsense" in what he did day to day.

He graded out the best of the I-backs and the "coaches felt he deserved the starting spot."

But only for the first game, after which he had to earn the right to stay atop the depth chart. The starting job remains a week-to-week thing, with Horne and Ross as likely to have it.

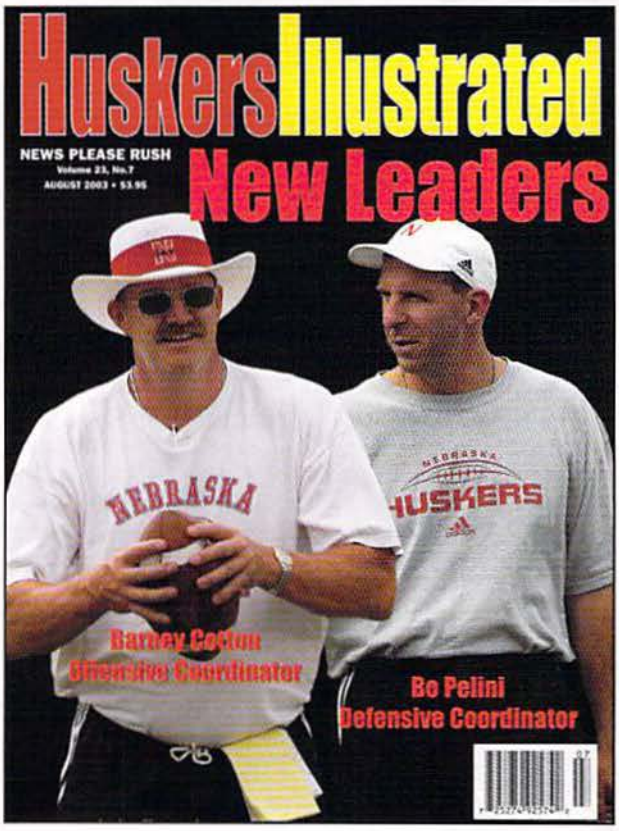
That's how Albin said it would be when he took over from Gillespie.

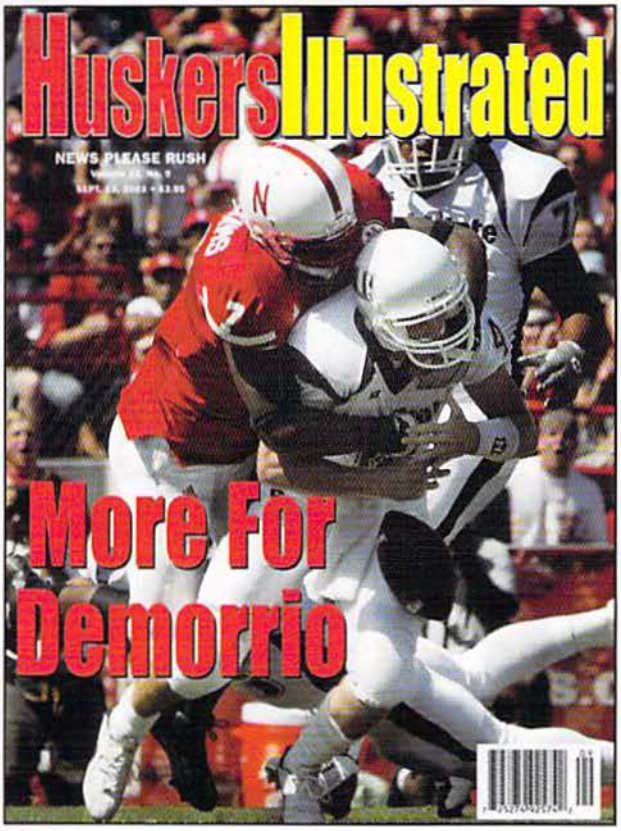
And "I'm a man of my word," Albin says.

It's all about competition, and communication. ■

Mike Babcock *is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years. Mike can be reached at MBABCOCK1@neb.rr.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.*

All Huskers . . .





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. . . All The Time

Backup Plan

Lord says competition should make both quarterbacks better

Curt McKEEVER

HE LOOKED remarkably smooth in his debut against Utah State, but I'd still be surprised to see Joe Dailey be thrust into crunch-time duty at Southern Mississippi.

For starters, the company line on the true freshman has been that he isn't challenging Jammal Lord, rather that he emerged from a two-man list as the top backup.

Then again, coaches change their minds all the time.

Look at Texas A&M, where first-year coach Dennis Franchione maintained the Aggies would alternate between junior Dustin Long and sophomore Reggie McNeal. That plan lasted for the Aggies' season opener. The next week, in a 28-26 win against Utah, McNeal started off by completing nine straight passes, then played the rest of the game.

Franchione said he decided to go with McNeal because of how he had practiced and because of the rollin'-on-the-river rhythm he was in against Utah.

I can't recall whether Eric Crouch was practicing any better than Bobby Newcombe back when he was handed Nebraska's starting quarterback spot. But I know who looked better on Saturdays, then. And I suspect that the fifth-year senior Lord might recognize his need to keep producing if Dailey would see early action any time in the near future.

I think he already recognizes that Dailey's presence might make him better.

Following Nebraska's 31-7 win against Utah State, Dailey was the talk of Huskerville.

Joe Dailey finished with 94 yards in total offense in his debut.

He was surrounded by television cameras on the field after the game. A reporter even asked Utah State Coach Mick Dennehy about Dailey, and Dennehy took a politically correct stance by heaping praise on both players.

If there was a quarterback controversy to be started, Dennehy wasn't biting.

It was interesting, though, that after the game Frank Solich refused comment when asked for Dailey's standing in relation to Lord. Essentially, he passed on a prime opportunity to give his starter a vote of confidence.

"I think Joe had an excellent day for his first time on the field," Solich said of a game in which Dailey entered late in the third quarter with the Huskers up 28-7. "I thought Jammal also did an awful lot of good things again.

"It looks like we will have a chance to maybe have two quarterbacks who can get some things done, and that's what we're after — to get some depth at the position and make it be a situation where we can have a second quarterback go in."

Lord, a 46-percent passer last season, completed 8 of 12 passes for 85 yards, including a 39-yard completion to tight end Matt Herian early in the third quarter to set up the touchdown that allowed Nebraska to take control of a difficult test. He also ran for 72 yards, but in a fitting illustration of Nebraska's struggles in the red zone, missed Herian on a fade route near the back of the end zone.

Dailey, meanwhile, completed 4 of 5 passes for 47 yards and ran nine times for another 47.

After a three-and-out series, he guided a nine-play, 47-yard drive that led to fellow freshman David Dyches' 26-yard field goal. During the march, Dailey bolted 23 yards on an option left and completed two passes to Ross Pilkington totaling 22 yards.

On Nebraska's final possession, Dailey marched the Huskers 55 yards and had a highlight-film, 10-yard run in which he broke two tackles on a fourth-and-6 play. But Dailey still lost a fumble while trying to stretch the ball over the goal line.

Considering the crowd's enthusiastic response to the newcomer, they overlooked that miscue. But first-year offensive coordinator Barney Cotton was quick to quash any thoughts that a change on the depth chart would be forthcoming.

"We have a starting quarterback, and his name is Jammal Lord," Cotton said. "What we're trying to do is develop a viable backup."

Cotton later added, "I think the most popular guy is always the second-team quarterback. I think that's kind of human nature, to think maybe there might be something better than what's out there.

"We have the greatest fans in the world. But we do have a starting quarterback, and we're very fortunate to have Joe Dailey as a backup, right now."

A-ha! Did you hear that? For the time being.

"I was yelling his name, too, to tell you the truth," said Lord of Dailey in a lighter moment. "Hopefully, he'll push me, and I'll push him, and keep getting better."

Judging by his first-game performance against a tired defense, Dailey appears capable of doing just that. And if Nebraska's staff handles it in the right manner, the Huskers will be better off if the kid keeps progressing.

It just doesn't sound like they're ready to throw him into the white-hot fire of a barnburner.

Lord, a first-year starter last season and now, in a sense, starting all over again in Cotton's revamped offense, still looks like The Man.

"I don't think people understand how difficult that can be," Crouch said. "He learned one offense for three years. And now everything's changed. Calling the plays is different. You're reading a wristband now. You're reading different signals.

"There's a lot to think about. I commend Jammal for as well as he's done." ■

***Curt McKeever** is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.*

Uncertainty, Inconvenience

Husker players say they can't let outside factors affect them on road trips

Terry DOUGLASS

IT MIGHT SEEM STRANGE, considering recent history, but part of Dan Vili Waldrop enjoys road games.

Either before or after contests played away from Memorial Stadium, the Cornhuskers' senior tackle takes his video camera and shoots some footage of each new venue. His collection is sort of like a digital scrapbook of his playing days at Nebraska and all the places he's been.

"I like to just be able to look back at all the different stadiums that I've played in," Vili Waldrop said. "It's going to be nice to be able to show my kids, 'See here, I played at Penn State' and stuff like that."

However, bringing up what happened last year in Happy Valley is a grim reminder of the inherent dangers of playing away from home. Fueled by a juiced-up home crowd of 110,753, Penn State scored 33 unanswered points in a 40-7 victory over Nebraska.

The loss set the tone for Nebraska's play away from home last season. The Huskers were 1-4 in away games and had to pull off the biggest come-from-behind victory in the program's history for their lone road win, 38-31 at Texas A&M.

Finding pitfalls while playing in enemy territory is easy. Numerous factors are stacked against visiting teams. Some of them you can prepare for, and some of them you can't.

"You're out of your whole element," Vili Waldrop said. "You've got to deal with it. The best thing to remember is that you're there to play football and nothing else. You can't let all the outside factors affect you.

Dan Vili Waldrop is in his third year as a starting tackle.

"You don't have all your fans there, and you don't quite get the support that we're used to at home. You have to get it from your teammates and coaches."

Last year's experiences in road games definitely made an impression on Nebraska tight end Matt Herian. As a true freshman, Herian said there really wasn't much his older, more experienced teammates could tell him to prepare for what the hostile environments might be like. It's something a player has to experience for himself.

"It really is a big task going on the road because there's just so many things, little details, that have to be taken care of that you don't have to worry about when you're playing at home," Herian said. "You're staying in a different place, sleeping in a strange bed and eating different food."

The uncertainty and inconveniences don't end at the team hotel.

"Every time you get to a new stadium, it seems like the playing surfaces are different," Herian said. "You've got to check that and make sure that you've got your shoes right and won't be slipping around out there on the field. There are just so many things that are factors that you take for granted when you're at home."

Nebraska certainly hasn't been immune to road woes in recent years. Starting with the 62-36 "Black Friday" loss at Colorado to cap the 2001 regular season, the Huskers have lost five of their last six away games.

Despite the recent track record, Herian insists that the Huskers maintain a positive attitude about road games.

"There might have been some people in the past that thought that way, but I don't know anyone on this team that has," Herian said. "When you're going to play on the road, you've got to have your mind right. If you're going there already thinking that that some bad things are going to happen to you, then you're already beat."

Nebraska's first road test this season should be an interesting one. The Huskers play at Southern Miss in a Thursday game televised nationally by ESPN. The idea of taking the college football spotlight definitely appeals to the Huskers.

"I love that," Vili Waldrop said. "I love getting on national TV. I love knowing that my family can watch me. My family can't get to Lincoln all the time, so it's nice that they can see me that way."

M.M. Roberts Stadium in Hattiesburg, Miss., has a listed capacity of 33,000, but Herian is expecting a boisterous sellout crowd.

"It should be a great experience for us," Herian said. "I can always remember watching the Thursday night games on ESPN, but I never really imagined playing in one. Being on a Thursday night, it's going to alter the way we prepare for the game a little bit, but it should be fun."

It can also be good for the program, but there's a catch.

"Being on national TV always gives you a great chance to show what kind of program we have at Nebraska," Herian said. "The down side to that is that you want to make sure you always play well because you know that everyone is watching. So in that way, there's a little bit more pressure."

Going to the road can be good for teams because it forces them to come together. Taking on the classic "us against the world" mentality brings out the best in some squads.

Still, Vili Waldrop has been at Nebraska long enough to know that the Huskers won't be completely alone. Like every road game, he expects to see a nice-sized contingent of Big Red fans make the trip to follow their team.

And don't be surprised to find Vili Waldrop mingling with fans after the game and thanking them for their support. He and his teammates have also been known to give fans some mementos — wristbands, gloves, etc. — after road games.

"If they're my fans, they can have whatever they want," Vili Waldrop said. "I like doing that. If you drive all the way down to Texas A&M or some place like that, you deserve something.

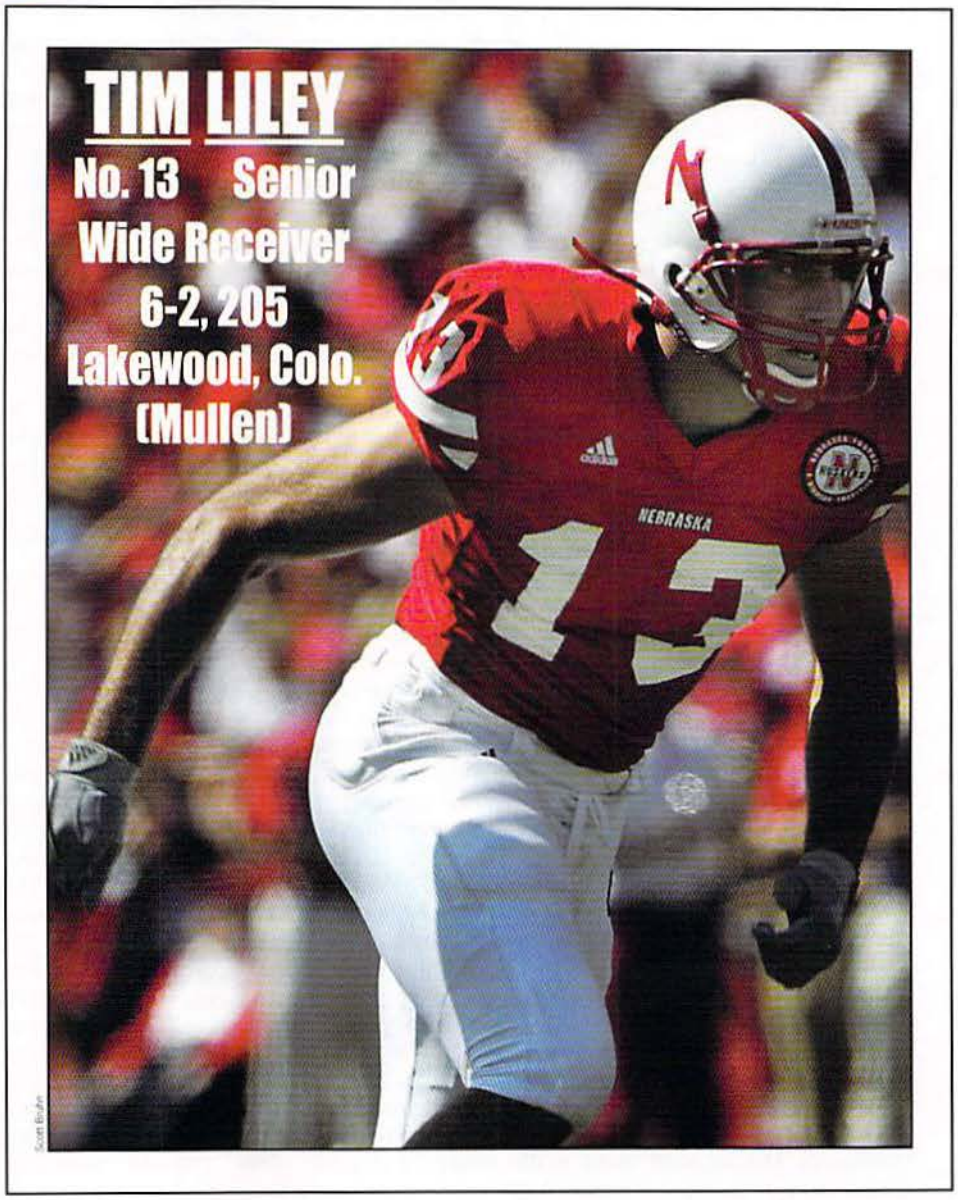
"The way Nebraska fans take those trips and follow the team is really amazing." ■

Terry Douglass *is the sports editor of the Grand Island Independent. He can be reached at tdbbdouglass@earthlink.net.*

PLAYER PROFILE

Taking a Chance

Wide receiver Liley bypassed track scholarship for shot with NU



When one of his coaches at Denver's Mullen High School told him a recruiter from Nebraska was there to talk to him at practice, Tim Liley thought it was a joke. "Yeh, right," he said.

But sure enough, Ron Brown wanted to meet with him. Brown looked at his hands, to see how big they were, and then asked if he thought he could play at the major college level.

Until that day, Liley had never really considered playing football in college. For one thing, he hadn't gone out for football until his senior year in high school. And for another, he was successful enough in track and field that Kansas had offered him a scholarship as a decathlete.

Current Nebraska assistant Rick Attig had been recruiting him for the Jayhawks.

Still, the Nebraska football team's interest was intriguing, even if it meant he would have to walk on. "I thought it was a risk worth taking," says the Cornhuskers' senior wide receiver.

So he discussed the idea with his parents, who were "just as shocked as everybody else," and began weighing his options, a process that took until February of that senior year.

The scholarship at Kansas was enticing, "but something with Coach Brown kind of pushed me toward here," Liley says. "It seemed like a challenge to me, seemed kind of fun.

"So I decided to give it a shot. I decided kind of late. But it definitely was worth it."

That despite the fact he rarely got on the field until this season.

Liley's rise from scout-team obscurity to downfield blocker — he had a couple of highlight blocks in the opener, according to Barney Cotton — is even more remarkable given his limited experience.

In addition to being a two-time state long jump champion, he earned letters in basketball and golf at Mullen High. But he had never played organized football until his senior year.

Prior to that, the football coaches had encouraged him to play, without success. And even then, he didn't decide to give football a try until two weeks before preseason practice began.

"I had never touched a football," says Liley, who would earn all-league recognition on a team that ranked No. 1 in the state. "But what did I have to lose? Things just kind of

fell into place."

All-league or not, "I didn't really feel like I was a football player until I was here for a couple of years, because you've got to get acclimated," he says. "It took some adjusting.

"But other than that, it's just another sport."

An athlete of his abilities can say football is "just another sport." He never had problems catching passes because of the eye-hand coordination developed in basketball, as well as in golf.

And running pass routes, as his coaches pointed out, was like "running the lanes in basketball, getting to the open spot," he says. "Essentially, that's how I translated it into football."

As for golf, he grew up playing it.

His older brother, Joe, played golf at Colorado and then briefly as a professional. "He was probably a plus-1 or plus-2 (handicap), and he was still in the middle of the mix, so that's probably not something I have the ability to do," he says.

His handicap is "9 or 10." He can "play pretty well, hold my own."

He definitely can hold his own off the tee. He won a long-drive contest two years ago, with a best drive of 412 yards, using a borrowed driver. That was in Colorado, at altitude, he says.

"Playing golf for so long, I've got a decent enough swing that I can swing pretty hard and still stay on track. I usually go out there and try to smack it as far as I can."

Though he doesn't bring up the subject, his teammates occasionally have when he has played golf with them, asking him to hit another drive. "It's kind of humorous," he says. They "can't believe how hard that ball comes off the club (face). It's kind of a circus act, to be honest with you."

Because he's a long hitter, Liley sometimes takes chances on the golf course, a personal characteristic that contributed to his decision to walk on at Nebraska to play football.

"I was taking a real big chance," he says. "But that's kind of the person I am. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I didn't want to look back and say, 'What could I have done?' " ■

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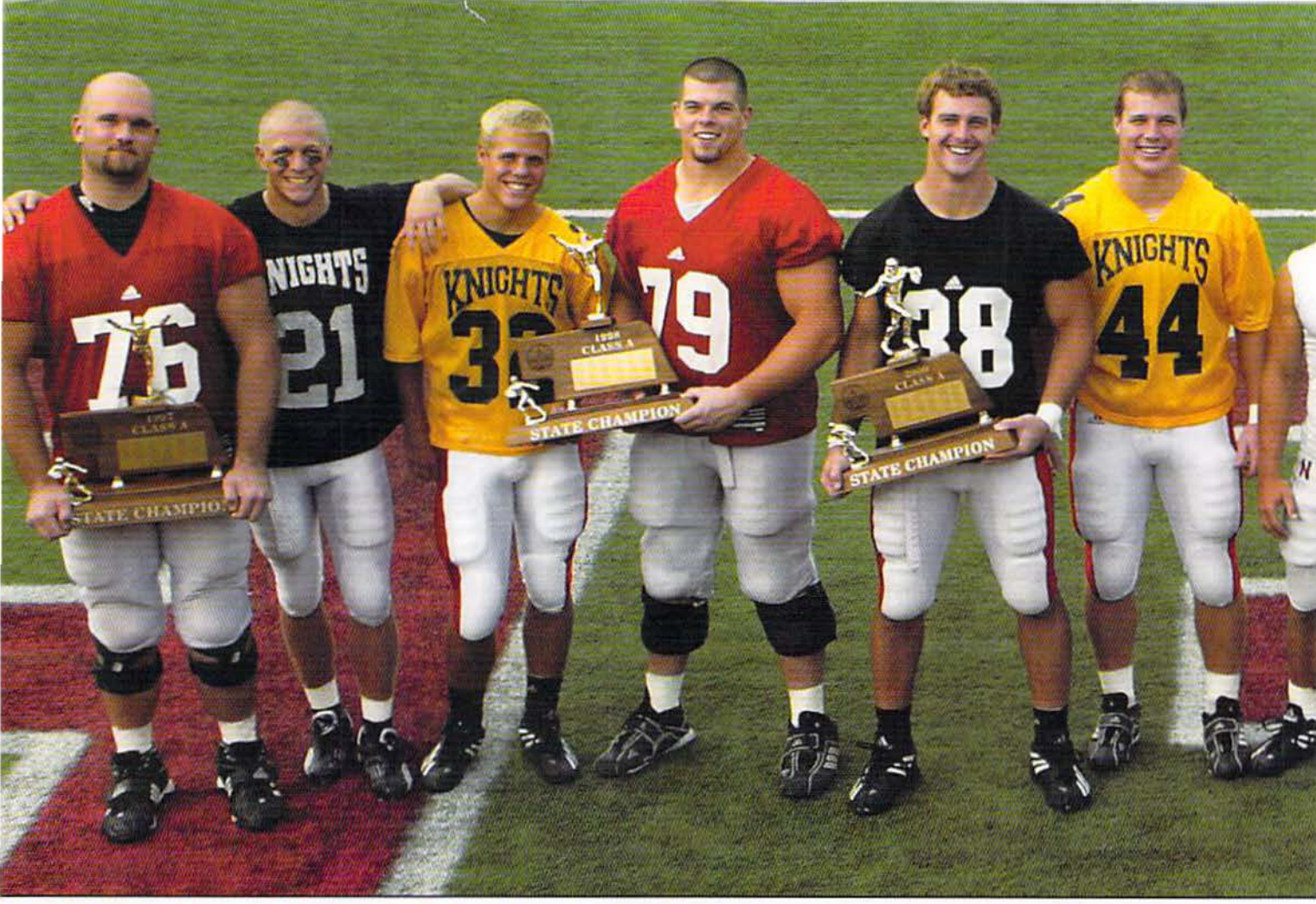


All Knigl

Nebraska's 2003 roster shows 'Southeast Connection' strong as ever

By Mike Babcock

A check of the roster in Nebraska's 2003 football media guide shows 10. But "I'm pretty sure there are 12," Fred Thorne said following a recent practice.

The senior cornerback was referring to the number of Cornhuskers who are graduates of his high school, Lincoln, Neb., Southeast. The media guide lists only 10 because freshman walk-ons can't be included. They aren't officially on the team until fall-semester classes begin.

So freshman walk-ons Matt Mullen and Andy Sand bring the number to 12.

Chris Loos, a senior offensive tackle who has battled knee problems the past two seasons, doesn't know the exact number but "there are a lot," he says. "There's always been kind of a pipeline from Southeast to here. I can't name everybody, but I know there have been a few."

This season's dozen is more than a few. The list includes Barrett Ruud, Josh Sewell, Andy Birkel and Dane Todd as well as Bo Ruud, Trevor Neemann, Brandon Rigoni and Seth White.

hts

Members of Nebraska's Lincoln Southeast contingent proudly display four of the school's state championship trophies. The Southeast players on the Cornhusker roster are (from left): Chris Loos, Fred Thorne, Seth White, Josh Sewell, Barrett Ruud, Dane Todd, Brandon Rigoni, Trevor Neemann, Matt Mullen, Bo Ruud, Andy Sand and Andy Birkel. (Photo by Scott Bruhn)

FEATURE STORY

And it reflects the quality of a Southeast program that is tied with Omaha Creighton Prep for the most state championships in the large-schools classification, eight. Southeast has reached the finals 11 times and qualified for the playoffs 21 times, second only to Creighton Prep in both categories.

As has been the case at Nebraska, success has fostered success at Southeast. "You don't want to let people down," says Barrett Ruud, who started on three of those state championship teams. "You always want to live up to expectations. And the coaches set those expectations high."

Those expectations and the resulting football tradition attracted Birkel, who transferred to Southeast from Lincoln East High in the middle of his junior year. That despite the fact it meant he and his twin brother Matt were on opposite sides of the field when Southeast and East played in 2002.

"It was a great move," says Birkel, a wide receiver playing as a true freshman.

Sewell also transferred to Southeast in his junior year, following an 0-9 season at Lincoln Christian, where he enrolled when his family moved from California after his sophomore year.

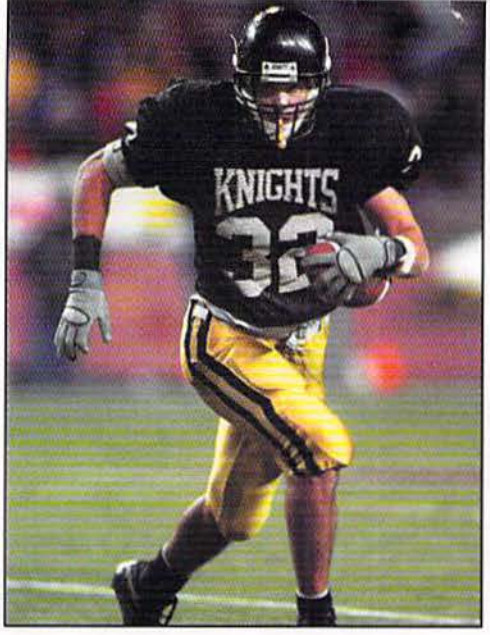
The family had planned to move to Lincoln a couple of years earlier, Sewell says, and he had planned to enroll at Southeast, at the urging of his grandparents — who lived in Lincoln. When he finally did move, "my grandma said Southeast was the place to go if I wanted to play football."

But his dad's former boss suggested he enroll at Lincoln Christian.

Though the 0-9 record provided the motivation that has driven his football career, one such season was enough. He decided it was "time to go to Southeast and play some real football," he says.

If he had enrolled there in the first place, he could have been part of two state championship teams instead of one, in 1998, with Barrett Ruud, Thorne, Loos and White as teammates.

Sewell and White rejoined their



Bo Ruud (left) and Andy Birkel (5, above) were members of Lincoln Southeast's most recent state championship team in 2002.

Southeast teammates at Nebraska, after going elsewhere following graduation, Sewell to Indiana State and White to Southern Methodist.

Even though he was a student at Southeast for less than two school years and didn't grow up with kids there, "I probably made some of my best friends," Sewell says. "I had good memories coming from California, but I can't say enough about Southeast. I had a blast. I loved it.

"I'm a Southeast guy. I'll be a Knight forever."

He also can't say enough about Knights Coach Chuck Mizerski, whose teams have won six of the eight state championships. Mizerski and his staff are a key element of the success.

"I think our coaches, their work ethic is probably as good as anywhere in the state," says Ruud. "I can't imagine anybody in the state working harder than our coaches do at Southeast."

Though it has been four years since he played there, he still uses the pronoun "our." As is the case with most Cornhuskers, and particularly those from in-state, high school ties remain strong.

"We've put up so many titles that it's kind of hard not to take pride in it," Todd says. "There's hardly ever a bad year at Southeast. I expect them (the Knights) to do well. But I try not to live in the past too much. I go back to a game every now and then. But I'm not a die-hard.

"I'm not going to dwell on whether they win or lose. It's their time, not mine."

The highlight of his career, in addition to blocking for Ruud and Rigoni, was winning the state championship in 2000 against a Creighton Prep team that included Titus Adams.

"He's such a good guy," says Todd, even when he's on the other team.

Todd, both Ruud brothers, Birkel, Loos and Neemann were scholarship recruits at Nebraska. The others came as walk-ons. His experience at Southeast influenced Thorne's decision to come to Nebraska, even though he could have gone to South Dakota State or some other small school.

"I wanted to be at a winning program," he says. "Southeast was the same way."

He wasn't surprised that Birkel would transfer. "You can go to Southeast and maybe not be a superstar, not get every ball, but you're going to be in a winning program," Thorne says.

Thorne's father, Fred, played football at Southeast for a young Frank Solich, whose teams won the first two of those state championships in the mid-1970s. So even though Lincoln has an open school district and students can pick which high school they want to attend, Thorne was going to Southeast.

His dad "had it already mapped out for me," he says. "It was written in the stars."

Loos was in a similar situation. "My dad wanted to get me there (Southeast)," he says. His family lived closer to another high school when he was younger but moved. "I think that's why."

Recently, Ben Eisenhart, a freshman walk-on cornerback from tiny Culbertson, Neb., wanted to know what high school Thorne had attended. "Southeast," Thorne replied.

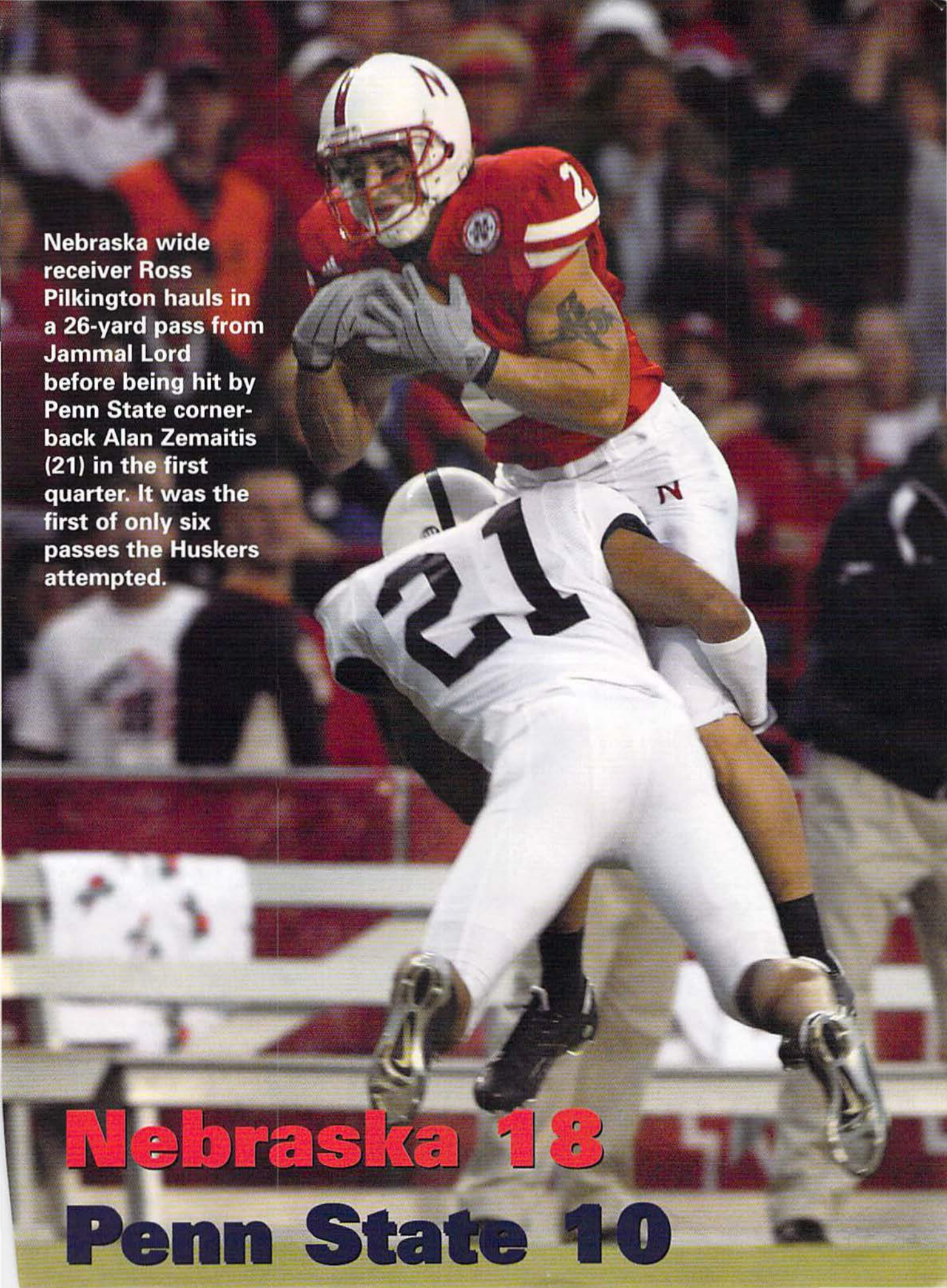
"How many of you guys are there?" Eisenhart asked.

Thorne knew the number without having to add them up — it's 12.

"I hope I didn't forget someone," he says. ■

Nebraska's Southeast Connection

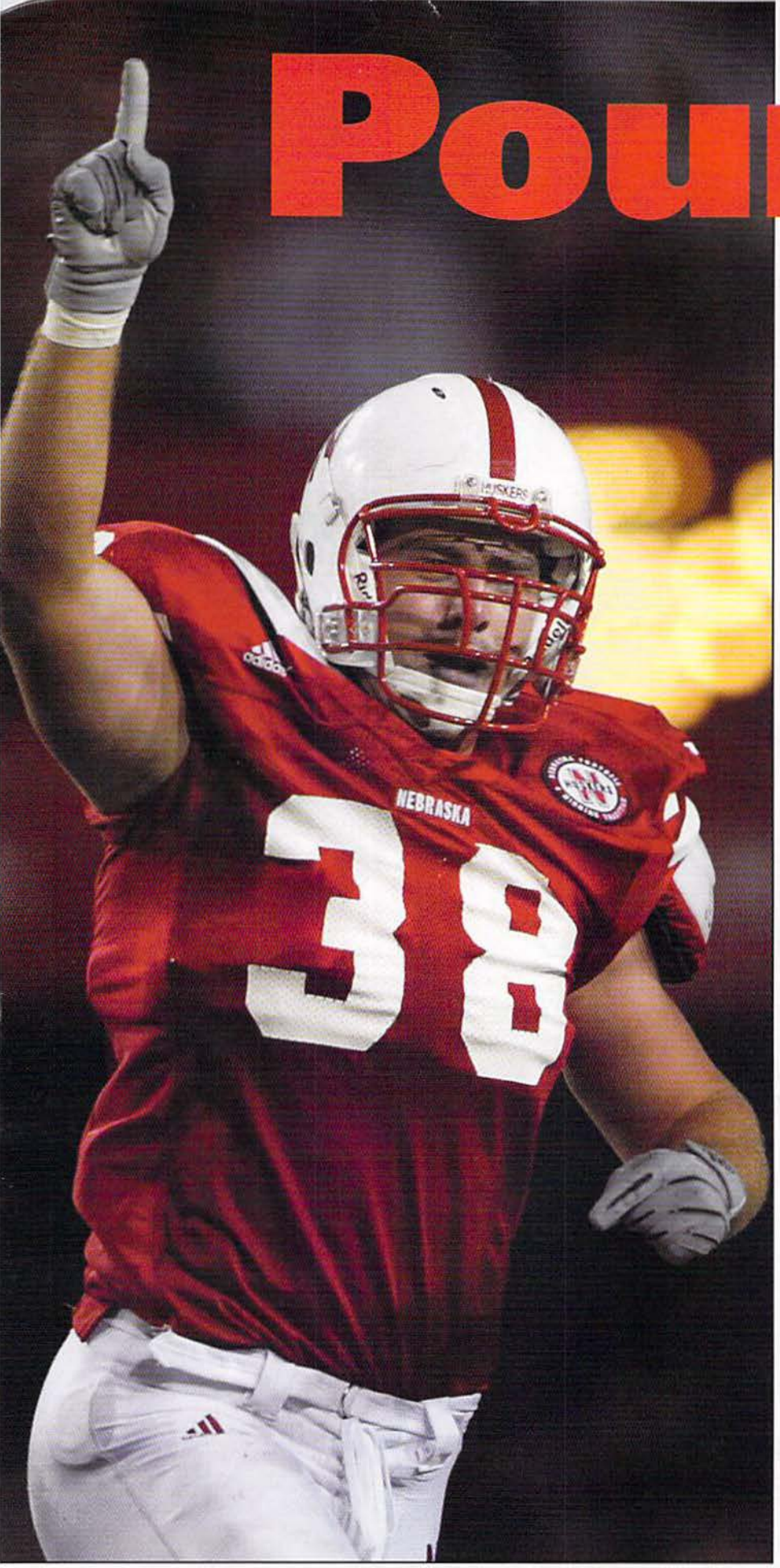
Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.
Andy Birkel	WR	6-2	170	Fr.
Chris Loos	OT	6-3	290	Sr.
Matt Mullen	OL	6-1	265	Fr.
Trevor Neemann	DE	6-2	235	Fr.
Brandon Rigoni	SS	5-6	180	RFr.
Barrett Ruud	MLB	6-2	235	Jr.
Bo Ruud	BLB	6-3	215	Fr.
Andy Sand	TE	6-2	200	Fr.
Josh Sewell	C	6-2	300	Sr.
Fred Thorne	CB	5-10	190	Sr.
Dane Todd	FB	5-10	235	RFr.
Seth White	CB	5-10	195	Sr.



Nebraska wide receiver Ross Pilkington hauls in a 26-yard pass from Jammal Lord before being hit by Penn State cornerback Alan Zemaitis (21) in the first quarter. It was the first of only six passes the Huskers attempted.

Nebraska 18
Penn State 10

Poundi



Nebraska middle linebacker Barrett Ruud celebrates after recovering a Penn State fumble with 6:49 remaining.

Nebraska combines relentless ground game, stout defense in 18-10 win

The aches and pains were already beginning to set in for Dan Vili Waldrop.

"I'll be hurting tomorrow morning," the senior offensive tackle said following Nebraska's 18-10 victory against Penn State. "But it'll be a good hurt," he added.

Actually, the "good hurt" part should be attributed to Phil Peetz, a senior tight end.

Peetz always finds the positive in a situation, said Vili Waldrop.

"It's a good hurt, Dan," he told Vili Waldrop.

"So we'll attribute that to Phil," Vili Waldrop said.

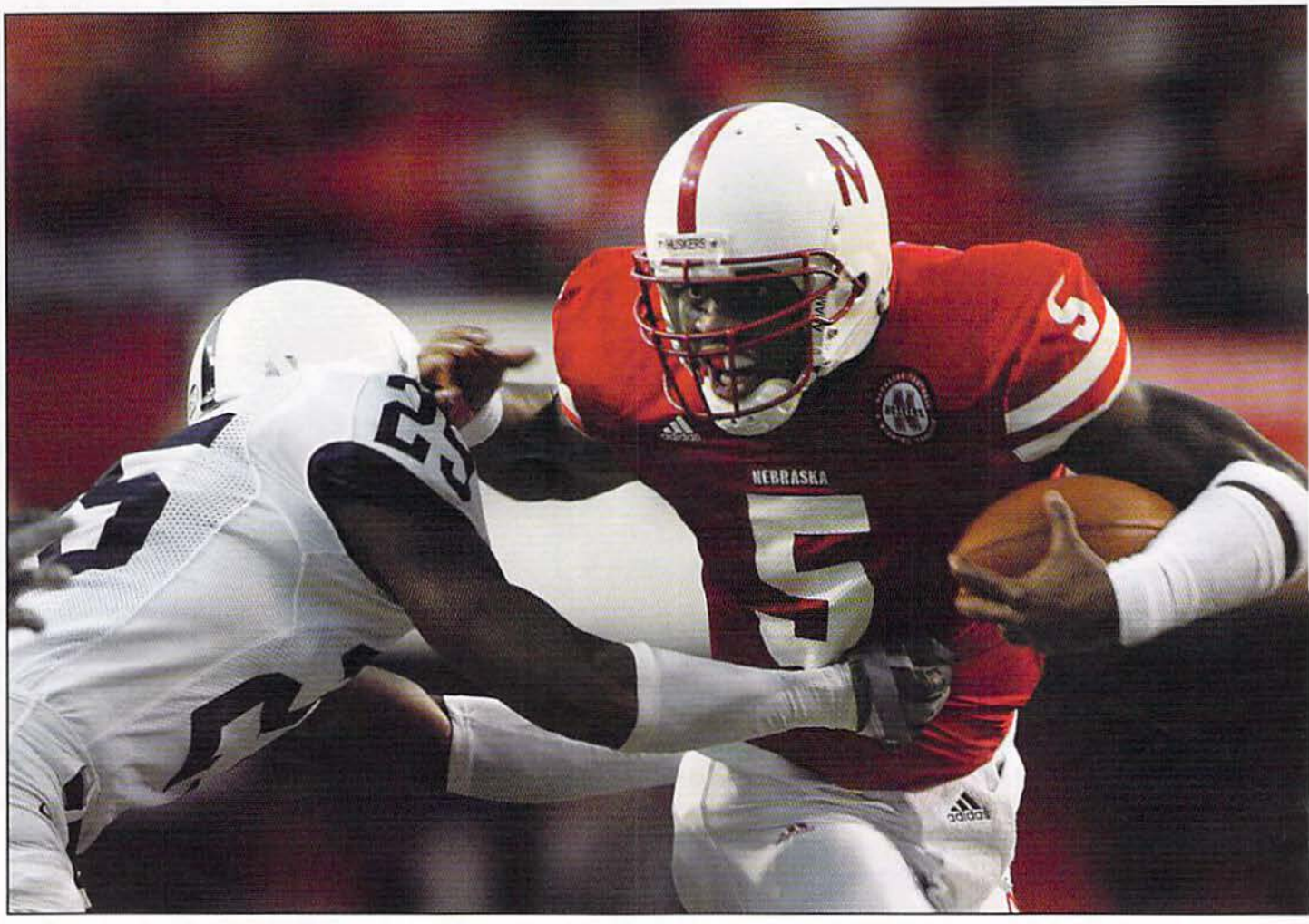
Vili Waldrop, all 6-foot-5 and 350 pounds of him, was beginning to hurt because he and the rest of the offensive line had spent the evening pounding on Penn State defensive linemen.

The Cornhuskers ran 78 plays and 72 of the plays they ran were runs, nothing fancy, a majority between the tackles. "We just played Nebraska football," is how Vili Waldrop put it.

"Our game plan was to pound it at 'em," said sophomore tackle Richie Incognito. "We have a ball control offense. We really got after them. We definitely started wearing them down."

Nebraska had a 19 1/2-minute advantage in time of possession,

ng Away



Quarterback Jammal Lord takes on Penn State cornerback Rich Gardner. Lord carried 20 times for 100 yards, the sixth time in his career he's reached the century mark.

Game Story

with more than 10 of that coming during the third quarter. Ah, the third quarter. It was vintage Cornhusker football.

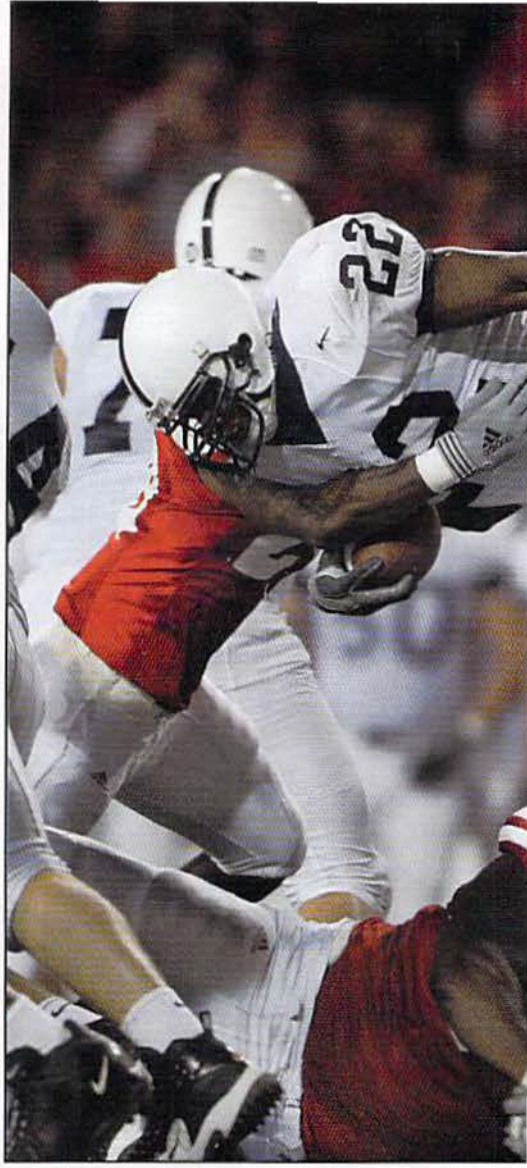
One press box observer described the offensive assault as "four yards and a cloud of ground-up tire particles," a reference to Memorial Stadium's FieldTurf base. "We're kind of playing to our strengths right now," said Nebraska offensive coordinator and line coach Barney Cotton.

Even though Nebraska controlled the ball during the first half, it trailed at the intermission 10-9, a reflection of on-going red-zone problems, which saw the Cornhuskers get inside the Penn State 20-yard line three times but come away with only six points, on two David Dyches' field goals.

Dyches kicked a third first-half field goal on a series that didn't reach the red zone and added a fourth with 3:53 remaining for insurance that, as it turned out, Nebraska's defense didn't need. Though Coach Frank Solich was glad to have them, "we score way too many field goals," he said.

What he was looking for was what the Cornhuskers did to open the second half. They drove 80 yards on 16 plays, to a touchdown — all of the plays were runs, including 10 by I-back Josh Davis, who finished with 179 yards on 32 carries. And the drive consumed 8 minutes and 12 seconds.

By Mike Babcock
Photos by Scott Bruhn



Penn State Coach Joe Paterno greets Nebraska's Frank Solich after the game (left). Solich's Huskers were able to shut down the Penn State yards. Penn State's leading rusher was Austin Scott (22, right), who finished with 19 yards. Scott is tackled by Josh Bullocks (left), Patrick K

Quarterback Jammal Lord, who rushed for 100 yards on 20 carries, capped the drive with a 3-yard run. "We're getting a pretty good production out of our running offense," said Solich.

Plus, the production led to a reduction in offensive opportunity for Penn State. The Nittany Lions ran only five plays from scrimmage during the third quarter, 24 fewer than Nebraska for the game.

"That's big," Solich said. "We want to be able to continue to do that."

The Cornhuskers also want to be able to throw the ball on occasion, something of which they didn't do much against Penn State. Lord was 4-of-6 passing, with one interception. He threw only one pass in the second half, good for 12 yards and a first down to tight end Matt Herian.

The interception ended Nebraska's second possession, on a second-and-12 at the Penn State 16-yard line, with wide receiver Ross Pilkington open in the end zone.

Lord also lost a fumble at his own 29-yard line to set up Penn State's touchdown with 10:28 remaining in the first half. "In terms of taking care of the ball, it was not a good first half for Jammal," said Solich. Had those problems continued, he might have turned to freshman Joe Dailey.

But "Joe did not have as good a week of practice as the previous week," he said. Also, Dailey wasn't feeling well the morning of the game, and a shoulder was bothering him.

The point was moot, anyway, because of Lord's play in the second half.

Lord, as has been his custom, was quick to credit the offensive line: Vili Waldrop and Incognito, guards Mike Erickson and Jake Andersen and center Josh Sewell.

They all played nearly every snap, and certainly didn't miss from weariness. Incognito went to the sideline briefly after taking a knee to the helmet. "We really got after them," he said.

By the third quarter, and maybe even near the end of the first half, "they were starting to get on each other," said Incognito. "What's really satisfying is, we could feel the life getting sucked out of them."

For the third consecutive game, Nebraska's defense didn't allow points in the second half and came up with big plays when they were needed, such as middle linebacker Barrett Ruud's fumble recovery at the 50-yard line with the Cornhuskers clinging to a 15-10 lead

running game, limiting the Nittany Lions to 44
bongo (on ground) and Benard Thomas.

and 6:49 remaining in the game.

Penn State had driven from its own 19-yard line to midfield, where it lined up first-and-10.

"I think he just dropped it, and it was lying under someone," Ruud said of Penn State quarterback Zack Mills. "I just grabbed it. I had to dig it out and get the ref's attention."

The post-game statistics also credited Ruud with a team-high seven tackles.

He had to get a shot for a shoulder injury, "a little ding," he said.

"It feels fine right now, but I'm sure it will hurt tomorrow."

Everyone would be hurting the next day, to some degree. But no one was likely to be complaining. "I enjoyed that a lot," said Vili Waldrop. "You can quote me on that."

But he was willing to attribute the "good hurt" comment to Peetz. ■

GAME NOTES

Notes And Quotes From The Penn State Game

STACKING UP THE RUN

Penn State's Michael Robinson was used primarily as a running back but also lined up at quarterback. He finished with a net of minus-2 yards rushing on five carries. "Nebraska did a really good job of defending the run tonight," said Robinson. "They really seemed to be keying on me.

"It seemed everywhere I went, there was also a defender waiting for me. The offense really didn't help the defense out. We have to give Nebraska credit."

The Nittany Lions managed only 44 rushing yards on 21 attempts.

SELECT COMPANY

Quarterback Jammal Lord's 100-yard rushing performance was the sixth of his career. The only other Husker quarterbacks with that many are Eric Crouch and Steve Taylor.

DEMORRIO DRAWS ATTENTION

Demorrio Williams was named the Big 12 Defensive Player of the Week for his efforts against Utah State, as well as making the pages of Sports Illustrated. The senior weakside linebacker was included in "A Williams Guide" in the Sept. 15, 2003 edition's "Inside College Football."

The magazine said the 6-foot-1, 215-pound Williams, who made 18 tackles and forced two fumbles in the first two games, "is bringing dominating D back to the Blackshirts."

His success prompted a question regarding whether or not Coach Frank Solich might consider using him on offense. "We hope Demorrio is played out from making tackles," Solich replied. "He is a very talented guy. But there will be no using Demorrio on offense. That's not in the plans."

Williams was credited with four tackles against Penn State

In the Tampa Bay-Philadelphia game on Monday night, Buccaneers defensive lineman Warren Sapp lined up at tight end and caught a pass. "Big-bodied guys sometimes can be stuck in on goal-line offenses as tight ends, and sometimes even as fullbacks," said Solich. "Sometimes teams do that."

Maybe he would try that with, say, defensive tackle Patrick Kabongo?

"No," Solich said with a smile, "wrong one."

WELCOME BACK, SOON

Senior nose tackle Jason Lohr, who is coming off a knee injury that has sidelined him most of the past two seasons, was able to practice leading up to the game. The defensive line "will just be bolstered with Jason Lohr coming back, and now being able to practice," said Solich.

Even though he is able to practice, there is no timetable as to when he'll be able to play. "He's just got to get in playing condition, plus he's got to get the feel of the game again," Solich said. "That will take a little bit of time. But it's great that he's back on the field."

ALL RIGHT AT NIGHT

Solich doesn't mind night games, "at home," he said during Tuesday's teleconference, "where your fans have all day to prepare for the game. It's a little difficult to play on the road with night games.

"We're going to face that when we go down to Southern Miss for an ESPN game."

Southern Mississippi is next up for the Cornhuskers, in Hattiesburg, Miss.

FUELING THE FIRE

Even though Penn State defensive end John Bronson fired what could have been an opening salvo in a war of words preceding the game, Nebraska refused to be drawn in.

During a mid-week teleconference, Bronson accused the Cornhuskers of trying to "take a lot of cheap shots." He also disrespected Nebraska offensive tackle Richie Incognito, who was ejected from last season's game for fighting with the Nittany Lions Jeremiah Davis.

Bronson said Incognito was "not the greatest thing in the world."

Solich declined comment and Incognito was not available after Wednesday's practice. Before Saturday games, Wednesday is the last day that Nebraska players can be interviewed.

After the game, Incognito was asked if there was any trash talking. "No comment," he said.

BRIEFLY

— Back-up quarterback Mike Stuntz was missing from the Nebraska sideline. Solich said the junior from Council Bluffs, Iowa, was at the game but not suited up because he is planning to redshirt. Stuntz played wide receiver as a true freshman.

— Senior punter Kyle Larson was Nebraska's special teams captain for the game.

— Cornhusker linebackers coach Jimmy Williams is the uncle of Penn State sophomore Lavon Chisley, a starting defensive end who recovered the fumble to set up the Nittany Lions' touchdown. ■

Scouting Report

2003 Schedule

1	Aug. 30	Oklahoma St. (2-1), W 17-7	1-0
2	Sept. 6	Utah State (0-3), W 31-7	2-0
3	Sept. 13	Penn State (1-2), W 18-10	3-0
4	Sept. 25	@ Southern Miss (2-1), 6:30 p.m., ESPN	
5	Oct. 4	Troy State (1-2), TBA	
6	Oct. 11	@ Missouri (3-0), TBA	
7	Oct. 18	Texas A&M (2-0), TBA (Homecoming)	
8	Oct. 25	Iowa State (2-1), TBA	
9	Nov. 1	@ Texas (1-1), TBA	
10	Nov. 8	@ Kansas (2-1), TBA	
11	Nov. 15	Kansas State (4-0), TBA	
12	Nov. 28	@ Colorado (2-1), 11 a.m., ABC	
	Dec. 7	Big 12 Championship at Kansas City, Mo., 7 p.m.	

Upcoming Opponents' Schedules

Southern Miss (2-1)

Aug. 30	@ California, L 34-2
Sept. 4	@ Ala.-Birmingham, W 17-12
Sept. 13	Memphis, W 23-6
Sept. 25	Nebraska
Oct. 4	@ Cincinnati
Oct. 11	@ Alabama
Oct. 25	South Florida
Nov. 1	Louisiana-Lafayette
Nov. 8	@ Houston
Nov. 15	Tulane
Nov. 20	TCU
Nov. 29	@ East Carolina

Troy State (1-2)

Aug. 30	@ Kansas State, L 41-5
Sept. 6	@ Minnesota, L 48-7
Sept. 13	@ Ala.-Birmingham, W 20-9
Sept. 20	SE Louisiana
Sept. 27	Marshall
Oct. 4	@ Nebraska
Oct. 18	Florida International
Oct. 25	@ Virginia
Nov. 1	@ North Texas
Nov. 8	@ Middle Tennessee St.
Nov. 15	@ Utah State
Nov. 22	Louisiana-Monroe

Big 12 At A Glance

Saturday, Sept. 13

Nebraska 18, Penn State 10
Arkansas 38, Texas 28
Iowa 40, Iowa State 21
Missouri 37, Eastern Illinois 0
Kansas State 38, Massachusetts 7
Washington State 47, Colorado 26
Kansas 42, Wyoming 35
Baylor 10, SMU 7
Oklahoma State 35, SW Missouri St. 3
Oklahoma 52, Fresno State 28

Thursday, Sept. 18

Texas A&M at Virginia Tech

Saturday, Sept. 20

Middle Tennessee at Missouri
Sam Houston State at Baylor
Jacksonville State at Kansas
Colorado at Florida State
Oklahoma State at SMU
Marshall at Kansas State
UCLA at Oklahoma
Texas at Rice
Texas Tech at North Carolina State

Thursday, Sept. 25

Nebraska at Southern Mississippi

Game 4

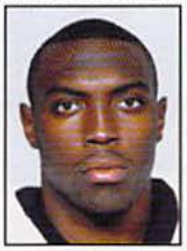
Southern Miss
Sept. 25

Location: Hattiesburg, Miss.
Enrollment: 15,259
2003 record: 2-1
Coach: Jeff Bower, 13th year
Series: Nebraska leads 1-0

6:30 p.m. CDT, ESPN
Roberts Stadium, Hattiesburg, Miss.

Eagle to Watch

Senior middle linebacker Rod Davis continues to post impressive numbers. A preseason All-American and the Conference USA Preseason Defensive Player of the Year, Davis has 35 tackles and has forced two fumbles in three games this season. He has 397 career tackles, including 168 (122 solos) last season as a junior.



Quick Facts

Southern Miss is expecting a record crowd at M.M. Roberts Stadium, where the listed capacity is 33,000. The Southern Miss-Jackson State season-opening game in 2002 set the single-game record at "The Rock" with a crowd of 35,169.

The game against Nebraska will be the second of three Thursday night games for USM, which defeated Alabama-Birmingham 17-12 Sept. 4 on ESPN2.

The Golden Eagles have won two straight since opening the season with a 34-2 loss at California.

The Southern Miss defense allowed just two field goals to the high-powered Memphis offense that was averaging 42 points a game. It was the first time since Sept. 28, 2002, that the USM defense had held an opponent without a touchdown.

On Deck

Troy State
Oct. 4

Location: Troy, Ala.
Enrollment: 6,630
2003 record: 1-2
Coach: Larry Blakeney, 13th year
Series: Nebraska leads 2-0

Time: TBA
Memorial Stadium, Lincoln, Neb.

Tentative 2-Deeps

Nebraska Offense

XWR	2	Ross Pilkington*	6-0	190	So.
	19	Andy Birkel	6-2	170	Fr.
LT	51	Richie Incognito*	6-3	300	So.
	69	Nick Povendo*	6-3	300	Jr.
LG	78	Mike Erickson**	6-4	305	Jr.
	72	Tim Green	6-4	325	Sr.
C	79	Josh Sewell*	6-2	300	Sr.
	64	Kurt Mann	6-3	290	RFr.
RG	71	Jake Andersen*	6-1	300	Jr.
	75	Brandon Koch	6-3	310	So.
RT	68	Dan Vili Waldrop***	6-5	350	Sr.
	68	Darren DeLone	6-5	320	Jr.
TE	11	Matt Herian*	6-5	240	So.
	82	Phil Peetz**	6-2	270	Sr.
QB	5	Jammal Lord***	6-2	220	Sr.
	12	Joe Dailey	6-0	200	Fr.
FB	4	Judd Davies***	6-0	250	Sr.
	45	Steve Kriewald**	5-10	250	Jr.
IB	1	Josh Davis**	5-11	205	Sr.
	9	David Horne*	6-0	200	So.
ZWR	10	Mark LeFlore*	5-11	185	So.
	13	Tim Liley*	6-2	205	Sr.
PK	27	David Dyches	6-1	190	Fr.

Nebraska Defense

LDE	5	Benard Thomas**	6-4	265	Jr.
	96	Titus Adams*	6-3	290	So.
NT	59	Ryon Bingham**	6-3	290	Sr.
	94	Patrick Kabongo***	6-6	320	Sr.
DT	66	Le Kevin Smith*	6-2	305	So.
	74	Brandon Teamer	6-5	270	Fr.
RDE	88	Trevor Johnson***	6-4	255	Sr.
	90	Adam Carriker	6-6	260	RFr.
BLB	2	T.J. Hollowell***	6-0	230	Sr.
	11	Ira Cooper**	6-2	230	Jr.
MLB	38	Barrett Ruud*	6-2	240	Jr.
	54	Chad Sievers*	6-3	230	Jr.
WLB	7	Demorrio Williams	6-1	210	Sr.
	39	Chad Buller*	5-11	215	Sr.
LCB	3	Fabian Washington*	5-11	175	So.
	4	Terrell Butler*	5-10	190	Sr.
FS	20	Josh Bullocks*	6-1	195	So.
	31	Jerrell Pippens***	6-2	195	Sr.
SS	21	Philip Bland**	5-11	205	Jr.
or	14	Daniel Bullocks*	6-1	200	So.
RCB	28	Pat Ricketts***	5-11	180	Sr.
or	1	Lornell McPherson**	5-9	175	Jr.
P	19	Kyle Larson**	6-0	205	Sr.

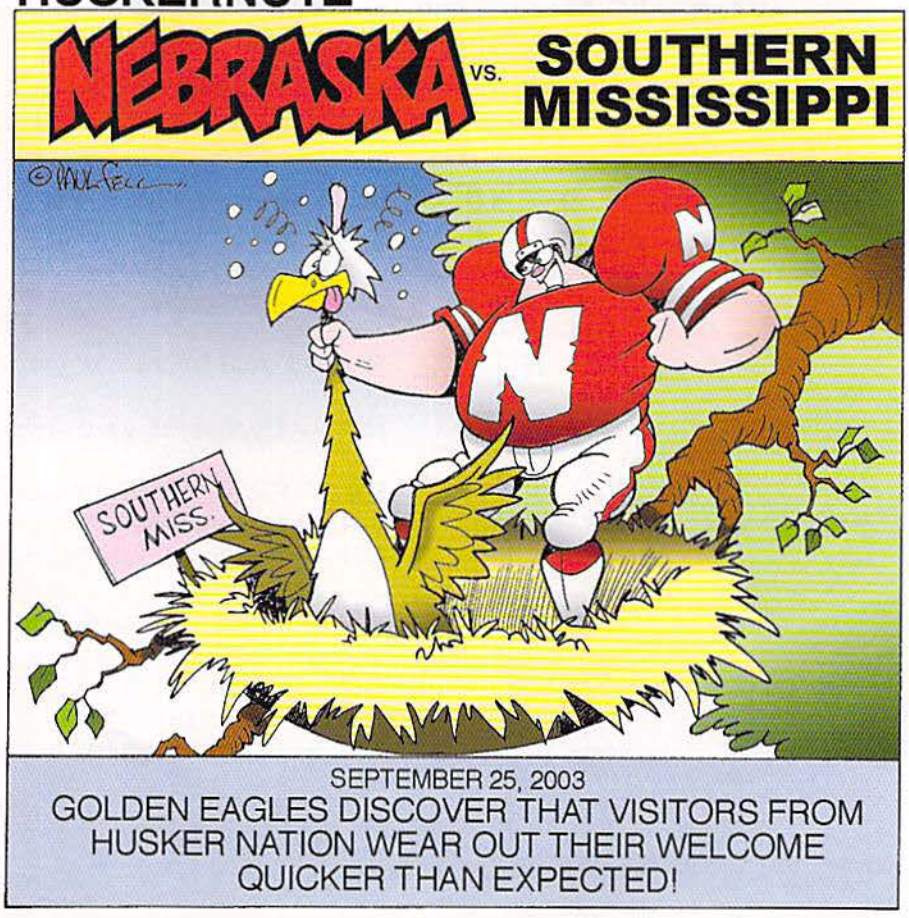
Southern Miss Offense

SE	85	Daron Lawrence	6-3	204	Jr.
	13	Kenneth Johnson	5-10	177	Sr.
LT	73	Neal Mead	6-4	310	So.
	72	Myron Powe	6-4	298	Jr.
LG	55	Travis Cooley	6-3	271	RFr.
	71	Bradley Worthington	6-4	295	So.
C	68	Jim Hicks	6-4	285	Sr.
	67	Addaryl Edwards	6-3	280	Jr.
RG	66	Chris White	6-3	280	Jr.
	70	George Batiste	6-5	282	RFr.
RT	77	Jeremy Parquet	6-7	312	Jr.
	78	Javar Young	6-5	278	Jr.
TE	35	Terrell Browden	6-3	260	Sr.
	19	Otho Graves	6-5	280	Jr.
WR	88	Marvin Young	6-0	165	Jr.
	25	Adam Hurst	5-11	175	RFr.
QB	7	Mickey D'Angelo	6-3	215	Jr.
	9	Dustin Almond	6-2	212	So.
FB	3	Anthony Harris	5-11	216	So.
	33	Bobby Weakley	5-11	235	Fr.
RB	11	James Walley	5-10	196	Jr.
	23	Tim Blackwell	5-11	190	Jr.
PK	16	Darren McCaleb	5-11	170	Fr.

Southern Miss Defense

DE	90	Ronald Jones	6-3	265	Sr.
	50	Akeem Lockett	6-2	235	So.
NT	95	Terrance Ford	6-4	280	So.
	96	Chad Ruffin	6-0	285	Jr.
DT	92	Eric Scott	6-0	288	Jr.
	99	Greg Casnave	6-3	281	RFr.
BAN	40	LeVon Pears	6-0	248	Jr.
	57	DeMarcus Barner	6-0	233	Jr.
SLB	27	Michael Boley	6-3	218	Jr.
	45	Kevis Coley	6-1	218	So.
MLB	24	Rod Davis	6-3	245	Sr.
	51	Dillon Cleckler	6-2	230	Jr.
WLB	42	Antoine Cash	6-1	208	Jr.
	41	Carsha Stromas	6-2	209	Jr.
FC	5	Greg Brooks	5-11	175	Sr.
	15	Seth Cumbie	5-11	180	Jr.
ROV	14	Alex Ray	5-11	203	Sr.
	8	Karone Champagne	5-10	196	Sr.
FS	28	Etric Pruitt	6-1	188	Sr.
	18	Trevis Coley	6-1	220	So.
BC	29	Corey Yates	5-10	181	Sr.
	1	John Eubanks	5-11	175	So.
P	17	Luke Johnson	6-0	250	So.

HUSKERNUTZ


NEBRASKA
VS.
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
SOUTHERN MISS.
SEPTEMBER 25, 2003
GOLDEN EAGLES DISCOVER THAT VISITORS FROM HUSKER NATION WEAR OUT THEIR WELCOME QUICKER THAN EXPECTED!

Picks

Nebraska At Southern Miss

Brian Hill
Editor

This is far from a gimme and shapes up as a defensive struggle. The Golden Eagles have allowed just 18 points in their two games since a season-opening loss at Cal and have an outstanding linebacker in Rod Davis. But Nebraska should be a tougher test than Alabama-Birmingham and Memphis. The Huskers will need more of their ball-control offense and will need to win the turnover battle. **Nebraska 19, Southern Miss 13**

Mike Babcock
Contributing Editor

This one will be a toughie. Southern Mississippi has ambushed some good teams in Hattiesburg. Nebraska's offense needs to play mistake-free, or at least close to it, and finish off drives. If it can do that, it can win. **Nebraska 20, Southern Miss 12**

Terry Douglass
Grand Island Independent
Sports Editor

Considering Nebraska's recent difficulties playing on the road, a trip to Hattiesburg for a Thursday night ESPN game certainly shapes up as an ambush alert for Nebraska. But while the home crowd will no doubt be stoked for one of the biggest home games in Southern Miss football history, the Golden Eagles might not have enough horsepower to get the job done. **Nebraska 22, Southern Miss 16**

GAME STATS

NEBRASKA VS. PENN STATE

Sept. 13, 2003 • Memorial Stadium • Lincoln, Neb.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

Penn State	**0**	**10**	**0**	**0**	**—**	**10**
Nebraska	**3**	**6**	**6**	**3**	**—**	**18**

TEAM STATS

	PS	NU
First Downs	13	23
Rushing	4	20
Passing	7	3
Penalty	2	0
Rushing Attempts	21	72
Yards Gained Rushing	63	364
Yards Lost Rushing	19	27
Net Yards Rushing	44	337
Net Yards Passing	159	60
Passes Attempted	33	6
Passes Completed	16	4
Had Intercepted	1	1
Total Plays	54	78
Total Net Yards	203	397
Avg. Gain Per Play	3.8	5.1
Fumbles-Lost	2-1	3-1
Penalties-Yards	1-5	7-47
Punts-Yards	6-244	2-64
Avg. Per Punt	40.7	32.0
Punt Returns-Yards	0-0	6-58
Interceptions-Yards	1-13	1-0
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	3-52	0-0
Possession Time	20:15	39:45

SCORING

NU — David Dyches 36-yard field goal

NU — Dyches 35-yard field goal

PS — Ricky Upton 13-yard run (Robbie Gould kick)

NU — Dyches 41-yard field goal

PS — Gould 47-yard field goal

NU — Jammal Lord 3-yard run (Josh Davis run failed)

NU — Dyches 32-yard field goal

Att. — 78,008

Weather — mostly cloudy

Temp. — 64

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

PENN STATE

RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Scott, A.	6	19	3.2	8	0
McHugh, S.	3	14	4.7	7	0
Upton, R.	1	13	13.0	13	1
Mills, Z.	6	0	0.0	3	0
Robinson, M.	5	-2	-0.4	4	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Mills, Z.	16-33-1	48.5	159	0

RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
McHugh, S.	7	48	6.9	9	0
Johnson, T.	4	42	10.5	16	0
Smith, G.	2	41	20.5	31	0
Kranchick, M.	1	20	20.0	20	0
Palmer, K.	1	5	5.0	5	0
Robinson, M.	1	3	3.0	3	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Kapinos, J.	6	244	40.7	45

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Lowry, C.	3	52	17.3	18	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	Att.	Good	Long
Gould, R.	1	1	47

DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Capone, G.	4	10	14	0	0	0
Zemaitis, A.	5	7	12	0	0	0
Toles, D.	3	8	11	0	0	0
Wake, D.	5	5	10	0	0	0
Yisrael, Y.	4	5	9	1-4	1-13	0
Harrell, C.	2	6	8	0	0	0
Hall, T.	4	1	5	1-2	0	0
Chisley, L.	1	4	5	1-3	0	0
Guman, A.	3	2	5	0	0	0
Rice, M.	1	3	4	0	0	0
Gardner, R.	3	0	3	0	0	0
Johnson, E.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Bronson, J.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Cosby, T.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Daise, N.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Ryland, A.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Paxson, S.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Robinson, J.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Garcia, D.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Kapinos, J.	0	1	1	0	0	0
McHugh, S.	0	1	1	0	0	0

NEBRASKA

RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	32	179	5.6	42	0
Lord, J.	20	100	5.0	26	1
Horne, D.	14	61	4.4	11	0
Davies, J.	3	2	0.7	2	0
Kriewald, S.	1	0	0.0	0	0
Team	2	-5	-2.5	0	0

PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	4-6-1	66.7	60	0

RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
LeFlore, M.	2	22	11.0	12	0
Pilkington, R.	1	26	26.0	26	0
Herian, M.	1	12	12.0	12	0

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Larson, K.	2	64	32.0	36

PUNT RETURNS

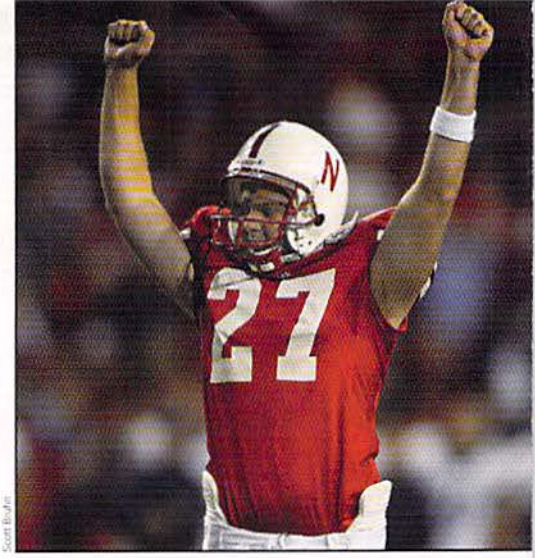
Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	6	58	9.7	26	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	Att.	Good	Long
Dyches, D	5	4	41

DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Ruud, B.	2	5	7	0	0	0
Washington, F.	3	3	6	0	1-0	0
Hollowell, T.	3	1	4	0	0	0
Smith, L.	2	2	4	2-10	0	0
Bullocks, J.	2	2	4	0	0	0
Williams, D.	0	4	4	0	0	0
Johnson, T.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Bingham, R.	1	1	2	1-2	0	0
Kabongo, P.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Brungardt, M.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Ricketts, P.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Adams, T.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Andersen, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Pippens, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Bland, P.	1	0	1	0	0	0
McPherson, L	1	0	1	0	0	0
Buller, C.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Thomas, B.	0	1	1	0	0	0



Scott Bruhn

Freshman David Dyches kicked four more field goals, giving him eight in two games.

2003 SEASON STATS

RUSHING

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Davis, J.	3	66	337	112.3	0
Lord, J.	3	58	262	87.3	2
Horne, D.	3	39	163	54.3	1
Dailey, J.	1	9	47	47.0	0
Davies, J.	3	14	36	12.0	2
Ross, C.	3	8	22	7.3	0
LeFlore, M.	3	1	21	7.0	0
Kriewald, S.	3	1	0	0.0	0

PASSING

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	3	20-34-2	58.8	223	0
Dailey, J.	1	4-5-0	80.0	47	0

RECEIVING

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Herian, M.	3	8	116	14.5	38.7	0
Pilkington, R.	3	8	99	12.4	33.0	0
LeFlore, M.	3	3	27	9.0	9.0	0
Davis, J.	3	2	19	9.5	6.3	0
Davies, J.	3	2	4	2.0	1.3	0
Liley, T.	3	1	5	5.0	1.7	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Dyches, D.	2	9	8	41
DeAngelis, S.	3	3	1	28

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Larson, K.	10	376	37.6	54

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	12	132	11.0	30	0
Ross, C.	1	14	14.0	15	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	2	62	31.0	32	0
Sievers, C.	1	8	8.0	8	0

DEFENSIVE LEADERS

Name	G	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	S/Yds.
Ruud, B.	3	8	17	25	1-1	0	0
Williams, D.	3	13	9	22	4-30	0	3-27
Washington, F.	3	15	7	22	0	1-0	0
Hollowell, T.	3	9	5	14	1-10	0	1-10
Johnson, T.	3	5	5	10	1-1	0	0
Bullocks, J.	3	2	7	9	0	3-0	0
Pippens, J.	3	6	2	8	1-7	0	1-7
Adams, T.	3	4	4	8	0	0	0
Bingham, R.	3	2	5	7	1-2	0	0
Buller, C.	3	4	3	7	0	0	0
Bland, P.	3	4	3	7	1-3	0	0

TEAM STATISTICS

	NU	OPP
Total Offensive Yards	1,148	624
Plays	240	170
Average Per Play	4.8	3.7
Average Per Game	382.7	208.0
Net Rushing Yards	878	190
Attempts	201	74
TDs Rushing	5	1
Net Passing Yards	270	434
Completions	24	46
Average Per Pass	6.9	4.5
Average Per Catch	11.2	9.4
Average Per Game	90.0	144.7
TDs Passing	0	2
Sacks By-Yards	5-44	0-0
Fumbles-Lost	9-4	8-5
Penalties-Yards	21-172	15-101

Scoring	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	TOT
NU	12	15	33	6	0	66
Opponents	14	10	0	0	0	24

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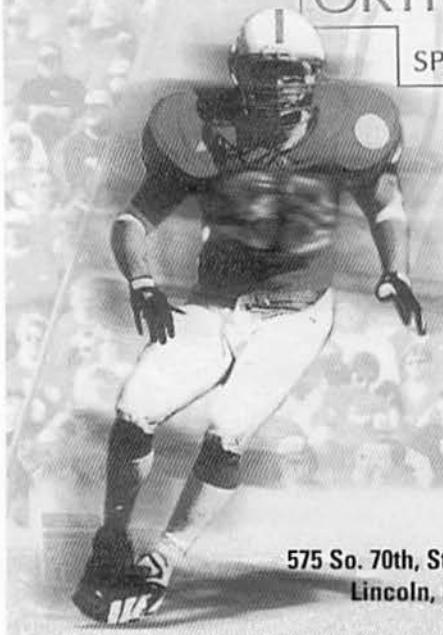

Patrick E. Clare, M.D.
David J. Clare, M.D.
Robert W. Dugas, M.D.
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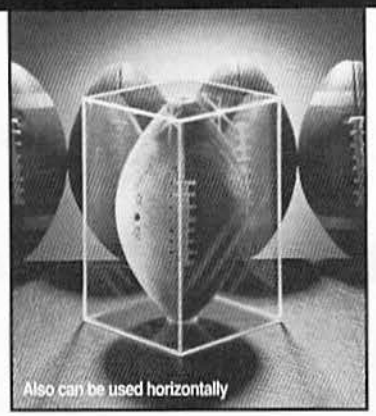

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Difficult Decision

Former Husker defensive tackle walked away after just 2 years in the NFL

By Mike Babcock

When Rod Horn woke up each morning, he couldn't believe his good fortune. He was working part-time for Wyoming Game and Fish in Yoder, Wyo., a job he might have done for free.

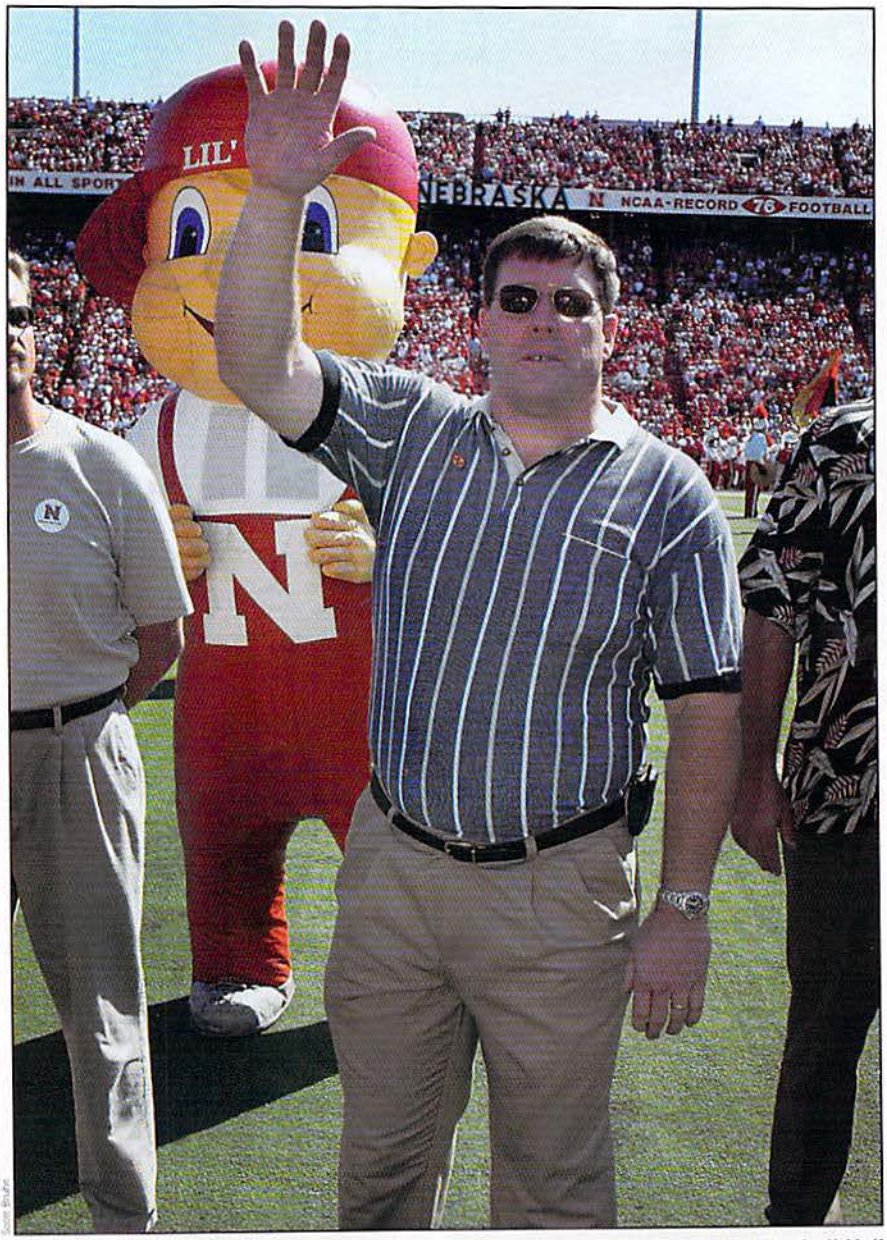
Compared to what he had spent the two previous years doing, it must have seemed that way. Horn had just finished a brief career as a defensive tackle for the NFL's Cincinnati Bengals.

Three days after the Bengals lost to the San Francisco 49ers in Super Bowl XVI, he was in Paul Brown's office, telling the Bengals' general manager that he was walking away. Out of courtesy, he wanted to give the Bengals as much time as possible to prepare for the next season.

He had no doubts about retiring after two seasons, the second of which he was a starter. The intensity, the burning desire to compete at football's highest level, just wasn't there anymore.

He had made the difficult decision before Coach Forrest Gregg's Bengals knew they would be playing in the Super Bowl, and "certainly, there were mixed emotions, ending a chapter in your life," says Horn, the general manager of the South Platte Natural Resources District in Sidney, Neb.

But "at that point in time, I was ready to go on with my career goal."



Rod Horn waves to the crowd as the newest members of the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame are introduced at the Utah State game.

He began formulating that goal long before Nebraska began recruiting him in high school in Fresno, Calif. By the time former Cornhusker assistant George Darlington contacted him for the first time, he was already planning for a career in wildlife management or a related field.

In fact, academics were a factor in his accepting the Cornhuskers' scholarship, after recruiting visits to Colorado and four Western Athletic Conference schools.

Nebraska offered the "best of both worlds," Horn says, a solid wildlife management program and a successful football program. He remembers watching the Cornhuskers on a television set in his high school's quad-

rangle during a football team picnic following preseason practice.

Nebraska was coming off back-to-back national championships. And he was impressed.

He would later be impressed by Darlington, Tom Osborne and Boyd Epley, whose strength and conditioning program was ahead of its time. "I didn't know why a kid wouldn't want to go there," says Horn, whose weight-room commitment earned him the nickname "Too Strong."

As a Cornhusker freshman, he was named "Weightlifter of the Year" and when he finished his career, he held school records in the power clean, bench press and squat lift.

His interest in lifting began as a means to an end, to become a better football player. He hadn't been successful at the youth-league level, and didn't play much until middle school. In his words, he "was not blessed with a lot of athletic ability."

And weight training was a way to compensate.

Also in high school, he realized that if he intended to continue playing football at the collegiate level, he would need to attend to his schoolwork. "I figured in order to get anywhere, I needed to turn it up and work on the grades," he says. "I had to work at it real hard."

Whether or not he was being modest — a readily apparent personal quality — the hard work in the classroom paid off. He earned Academic All-America honors as a senior in 1979.

He was two-time, first-team all-conference as a defensive tackle and started for three seasons, though his sophomore season was cut short by a knee injury suffered in late October.

Nebraska upset Coach Bear Bryant's Alabama team in the second game that season, but Horn lined up against offensive tackle Jim Bunch — three-time All-SEC as well as an All-American — and played poorly. So the next summer, he bought a movie projector and began taking home film to study.

He arrived in 1975, Osborne's third season, when Monte Kiffin was the defensive line coach and Jim Ross was the freshman coach. After a season on the freshman team, however, he redshirted, which meant Kiffin was gone when he began playing on the varsity, replaced by Charlie McBride.

As is the case with so many of those who played for McBride, Horn speaks with great affection for a coach he describes as "more of a throwback" to another time and place.

During a practice his sophomore season, Horn lined up wrong. "I was a half-person out of place," he says. "And in front of God and everybody, there was a foot planted in my backside."

The foot was McBride's, of course, and though some would look askance at such a teaching approach now, "I appreciated it," says Horn. "That might have been the difference in winning and losing. Coach McBride had a gruff personality, but he was respected. He got us ready."

McBride also got Horn ready to play in the NFL, as a third-round draft pick of the Bengals.

As with everything else, he appreciated his brief time in the NFL. But his decision to leave the game was final. "It used to bother me when players would retire and then come back," he says.

"I knew where I stood. That was finality as far as I was concerned."

After a few months in Wyoming, he was hired as a natural resources manager for the Forbes Ranch in south central Colorado, where he spent three-and-a-half years before returning to Nebraska.

Earlier this season, he was inducted into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame.

He "became a better person" for his experiences at Nebraska, he says. "It was a great time."

So was his time in the NFL, playing for Gregg, a coach in the mold of his coach, Vince Lombardi, and "one of the finest offensive linemen who ever played the game," says Horn.

Even so, he never regretted leaving when he did. Those mornings waking up in Wyoming provided a different kind of satisfaction, though admittedly, "the pay was different," Horn says. ■

Huskers Seeking Secondary Help

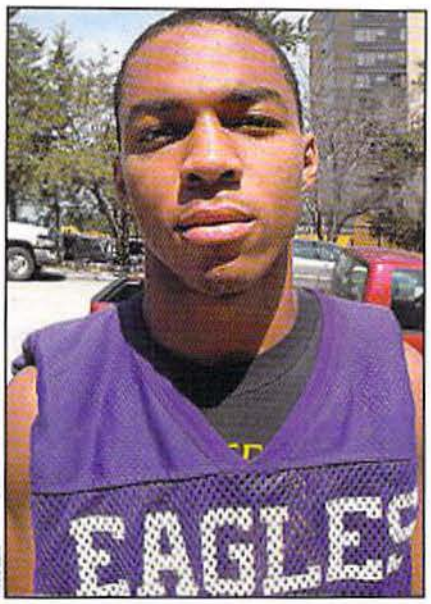
Omahan Grixby one of nation's top cornerback candidates

By Doug Horwich

Few recruiting deficiencies can hurt a team more than a lack of talent in the secondary, especially when a team plays in the Big 12 Conference. The Conference has undergone a dramatic metamorphosis over the past five years, evolving into a predominately pass-oriented league.

Gone are the Sooners of old and their classic wishbone. In their place is the spread offense that Coach Bob Stoops installed when he took over. At Texas Tech, former Oklahoma offensive coordinator Mike Leach has also installed the spread.

While most of the teams in the Big-12 run a balanced offense, the conference is loaded with top receiving talent, and a lack of talented players in the secondary can be detrimental. Receivers like Texas' Roy Williams and Oklahoma State's Rashaun Woods present severe challenges to teams deficient in quality defensive backs.



Highly regarded cornerback recruit Cortney Grixby of Central High School in Omaha, Neb., is the younger brother of Husker fullback DeAntae Grixby.

The Huskers have succeeded in signing talented players in the secondary in recent years, but depth remains a concern. Over the past three years, Nebraska has seen three of its defensive back recruits fail to qualify academically. Cornerback Danieal Manning ended up enrolling at Abilene Christian, while cornerback Antoine Bagwell and free safety Steve Craver have enrolled in junior college and are still expected to join the Husker program once eligible.

The Husker staff did manage to sign three talented cornerbacks in the 2003 class, but another 1-2 are likely to be targeted for 2004. The safety positions are also going to have to be addressed in this recruiting class.

In looking for top cornerback talent, the Husker staff won't have to look very far, as one of the most highly recruited cornerback prospects in the nation is playing just an hour away.

The younger brother of current Husker fullback DeAntae Grixby, Omaha Central's Cortney Grixby (5-

NEBRASKA COMMITMENTS FOR 2004

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Lance Brandenburgh	Overland Park, Kan. (St. Thomas Aquinas)	6-1	215	LB
Andy Christensen	Bennington, Neb.	6-3	275	DT
Allan Evridge	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-LaVista)	6-1	205	QB
Michael Keenan	Kansas City, Mo. (Oak Park)	6-2	220	LB
Maurice McClellan	Pawcatuck, Conn. (Stonington)	6-3	210	ATH
D.T. McDowell	Tucker, Ga.	6-1	190	QB
Terrence Nunn	Houston, Texas (Cypress Falls)	6-0	185	WR
Seth Olsen	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)	6-5	300	OL
Ty Steinkuhler	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)	6-3	235	DE
Nathan Swift	Hutchinson, Minn.	6-3	190	WR

foot-9, 160 pounds, 4.52-second 40-yard dash) is considered by most recruiting services to be one of the top five cornerback prospects in the nation this year.

Grixby is a two-sport athlete who has received written scholarship offers in both football and basketball.

Despite being an outstanding point guard on the basketball court, Grixby is receiving the most interest for his skills as a cornerback, and programs from all over the country are showing interest.

Though he is the younger brother of a current Husker and a Nebraska native, Grixby is by no means a lock for Coach Frank Solich and his staff. Not only has the talented cornerback not decided which school he wishes to attend, he hasn't even decided which sport he plans to focus on at the next level. However, Grixby is expected to accept a football scholarship and walk-on in basketball, as his future is more likely on the gridiron.

Though a liability on the basketball court, Grixby's 5-9 height is about average for a college cornerback.

While he also is looking at Colorado, UCLA, Notre Dame, Iowa and Iowa State, the Huskers are high on Grixby's list.

"I'm interested in Nebraska," he said. "That's the home school — that's home. I like the coaches down at Nebraska for both football and basketball. They are all very straight up with me. I really like the new coaches for football — they are more about business. They get straight to it and get things done. They have good discipline."

The revamped Husker staff, and specifically defensive backs coach Marvin Sanders, has made a very favorable impression on Grixby.

"I like Coach Sanders a lot," he said. "They say he gets real intense, but I like that. He's a real cool guy. I talked to him at the Spring Game and he was real genuine about the situation down there. He didn't pressure me or anything."

Grixby may or may not take an official visit to Nebraska, as he visits his brother regularly in Lincoln and will likely attend every Husker home game this season. Distance is not particularly important to him, and a

RECRUITING NOTES

Texas Receiver Picks Nebraska

By Rick Shaw

Nebraska took another step toward strengthening its future passing attack when receiver Terrence Nunn committed to Husker coaches on Sept. 1. The 6-foot-0, 185-pound speedster from Cypress Falls High School in Houston became Nebraska's 10th commitment for their 2004 recruiting class.

Nunn was the only official visitor in Lincoln to witness Nebraska's 17-7 victory over Oklahoma State on Aug. 30. He said the experience was nothing short of spectacular.

"It was fun," Nunn said. "The people and the players . . . they talk to you. The football program is excellent. They help you a lot, and they have a great tradition of Academic All-Americans. It just seems like a good fit as a player."

Nunn, who has excellent speed (4.4 second 40-yard dash), chose the Huskers over offers from Baylor, Wisconsin, Colorado, and Oklahoma State. He was selected first-team all-district as a junior in 2002 after accumulating 604 receiving yards and five touchdowns on just 27 catches.

"My speed and my soft hands are my strong points," Nunn said. "I also run good routes and am able to get open consistently."

Cypress Falls Coach David Raffield said that Nunn is a major talent that rivals all of the other players that he's coached over the course of his career.

"We have starting receivers right now at Arizona, Baylor, and UTEP and just had one graduate from TCU, and none of them are in the class that he is at . . . at this stage," Raffield said. "They all had some major void that they were working on.

"Terrence has tremendous natural hands and can catch anything around him. He has great acceleration and quickness. He also is a model kid. He's a great young leader. He is one that leads by example."

Nunn will bring an impressive athletic resume to Lincoln. He ran a 49.6-second 400-meter dash and a 10.65-second 100 meters in track last spring. He also boasts a 34-inch vertical leap.

"We have had a few that ran fast," Raffield said, "but he is the fastest that we have had."

— Although Nebraska didn't play host to any official visitors for its game against Utah State, a couple of visitors were possibly going to make their way to Lincoln to watch the Huskers take on Penn State.

Nyere Aumaitre, a 6-5, 300-pound offensive tackle from Woodrow Wilson High in Camden, N.J., said he was trying to firm up plans for an official visit to Nebraska. Aumaitre, who is rated as the 36th best offensive tackle prospect by Rivals.com claims more than 30 offers. Nebraska, Tennessee, North Carolina, Maryland, Virginia, Boston College and several others have extended early scholarship offers.

— Who will be commitment No. 11 for the Big Red? Don't bet against Clay Sievers of Elkhorn, Neb. The 6-4, 220-pound linebacker and brother of current Husker linebacker Chad Sievers, said he would likely make his college decision soon after taking an official visit to Iowa on Sept. 20. Sievers was in attendance at the Nebraska-Oklahoma State game as an unofficial visitor. ■

timetable has not yet been set for his decision.

Another cornerback who has been offered a scholarship by Nebraska is Joe Manning (5-11, 175, 4.4) from Lincoln High School in Tallahassee, Fla. Manning is one of four players from Lincoln High School who have been offered by the Husker staff. The talented senior had seven interceptions as a junior and is being recruited by a number of schools.

Nebraska is high on Manning's list of favorites, along with Florida State, Clemson, Louisville and Tennessee, and one of his five visits will almost surely be to Lincoln.

"Danny Muy (offensive lineman), Rodney Gallon (linebacker) and I are all going to visit Nebraska at the same time," Manning said. "I think I might take my Nebraska visit during the season. That would be the only one though. I'd take the rest of my visits after the season. I want to stay focused on winning a state championship."

Manning is being recruited for Nebraska by defensive coordinator Bo Pelini. "Me and Coach Pelini of Nebraska really have a good connection," Manning said. "He has the same good characteristics of my high school coach. It would be an easy adjustment playing for him. It wouldn't be a major change."

Although Manning currently favors Nebraska, he also likes Florida State a great deal. The difference is that the Seminoles have yet to offer him in writing, while Nebraska offered months ago. Manning is unlikely to wait much longer for a Florida State offer, though, and Nebraska and Tennessee are the teams to beat if the Seminoles don't offer soon.

Rivals.com

Cornerback Joe Manning has Nebraska high on his list.

The city of Bradenton, Fla., has provided Nebraska with tremendous talent over the years, and the Husker staff is pursuing another Bradenton player this year who they hope will follow in the footsteps of Tommie Frazier, Tyrone Williams, Leslie Dennis and Fabian Washington.

Safety Sirdarean Adams (6-0, 200, 4.4) from Manatee High School in Bradenton is a versatile defensive back who has the size to play safety and also the speed to play cornerback.

Adams is being recruited by many of the nation's top programs and has an early list of favorites that includes Florida, Ohio State, Miami, Nebraska and Florida State. One factor in the Huskers' favor is the fact Adams is a close friend of Husker cornerback Fabian Washington.

"Nebraska probably has the edge right now, even though I mentioned earlier that no team has the edge," Adams said. "The biggest thing I like about them is that their coaching staff is like a family. I talked to Fabian (Washington) last night. He told me that he could almost guarantee me that I'd get a chance to play and maybe even start at Nebraska as a freshman. Nebraska is recruiting me to play running back, safety, and maybe even quarterback." ■

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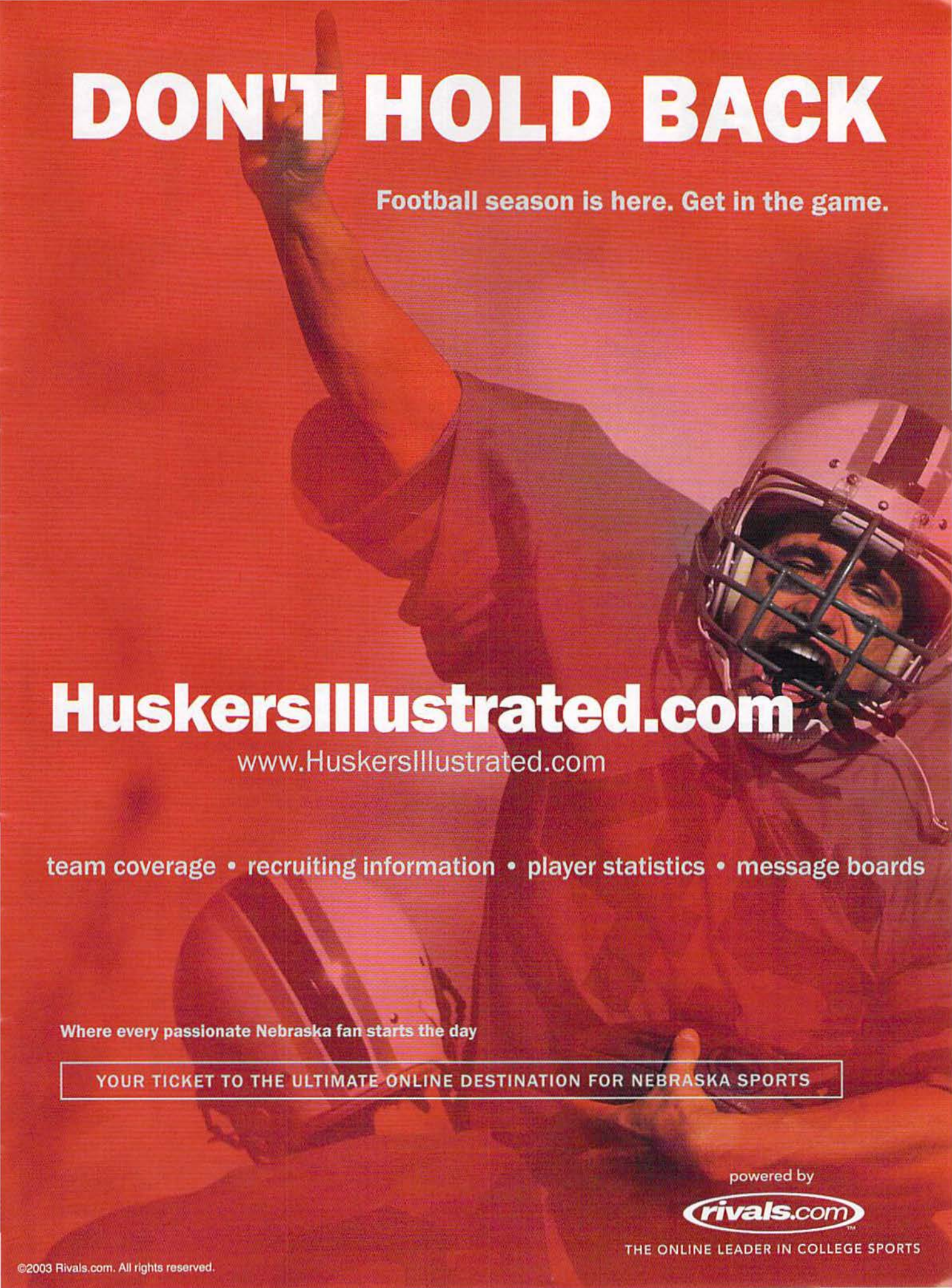
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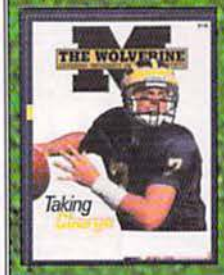

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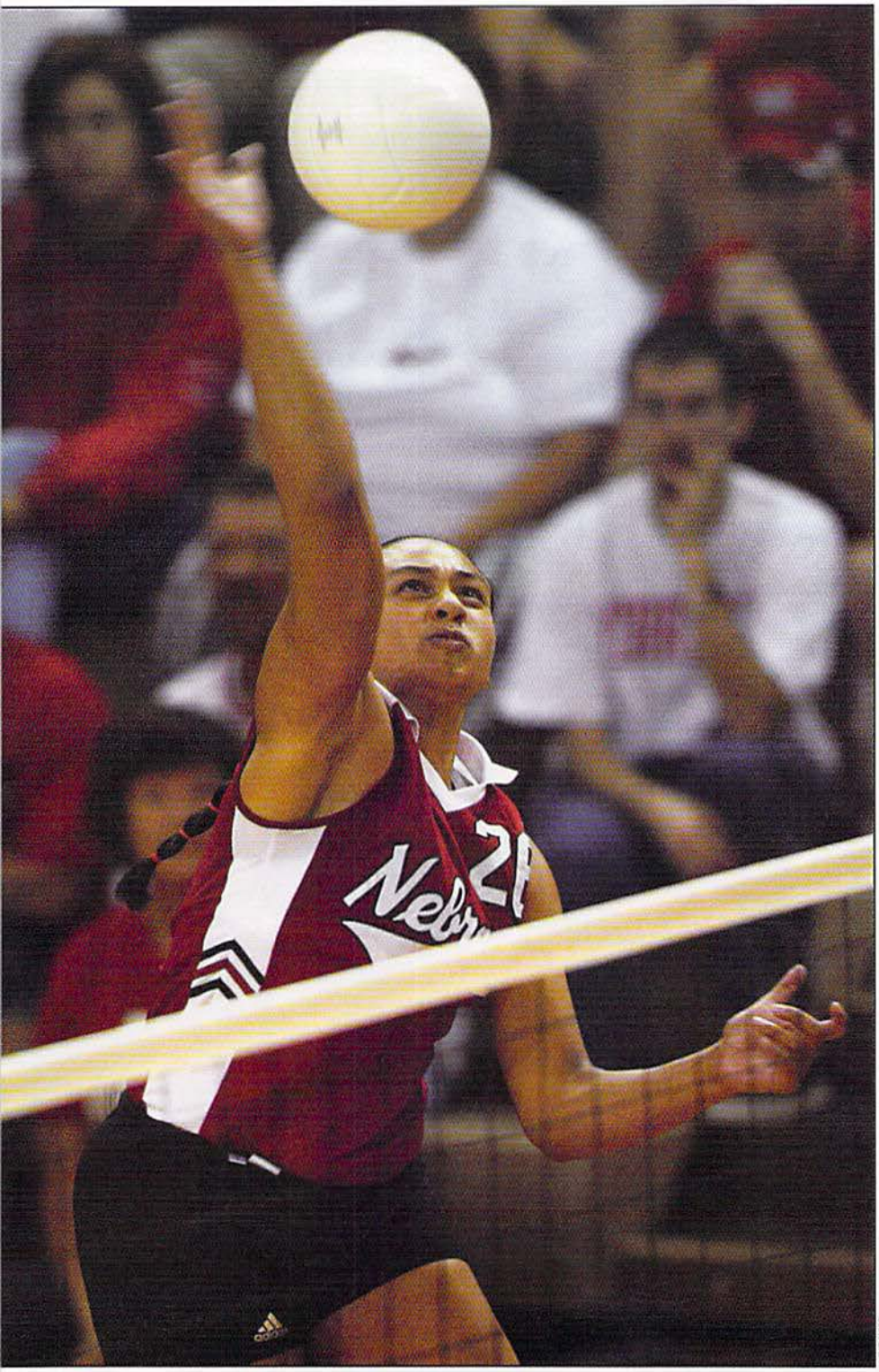

Jennifer Saleaumua, who started all 32 matches on the right side as a freshman, has moved to the left side this season.

Sophomore Saleaumua 'makes plays that nobody else can make'

By Todd Henrichs

Her swing won't knock you over, and the vast majority of her digs and passes go virtually unnoticed in the course of a volleyball match.

But set out to pick the one most valued player for Nebraska this season, and Jennifer Saleaumua stands out like a beam streaming from a waterfront lighthouse on a crystal clear night.

The 5-foot-11 Saleaumua is universally accepted as Nebraska's all-around player. For proof, the sophomore outside hitter was on the winning side in four of five games played in the team's preseason Red-White Scrimmage.

Saleaumua began the night with the starters, and after two easy wins, she traded sides and played on the winning side for games three and four.

Coach John Cook already knew that Saleaumua was a key cog in Nebraska's pursuit of another Big 12 Conference championship. It's why he switched Saleaumua to the left side after she started all 32 of NU's matches on the right side last year.

"The change in position has put her more in the limelight," Cook said. "There's more balls hit to those areas, so it just puts her in a position to touch the ball more. That's what we want because she makes plays that nobody else makes."

Cook challenged Saleaumua to make even more of an impact this season, not only with her consistently strong passing and steady floor defense but by helping to bring along the bevy of young players molding into a team this season.

Saleaumua, who played on the left in high school, likes the move although she's still making the adjustment as a blocker. Her leadership is also key since Saleaumua and Anna Schrad are the only Huskers who play in every rotation within the two-setter system.

But more than her physical skills, Saleaumua's ability to communicate on the court and bring energy to the team is critical.

"I played last year, so I know a little bit more, and it feels like I have to take a step up to help out the team," Saleaumua said. "I'm trying to make them feel comfortable on the court, take away the stress and get them to not worry about their technique and just play.

"Just talking to them helps quite a bit."

Saleaumua's defense speaks volumes.

She plays with a boxer's mentality. When strong-armed opponents try to punch holes in Nebraska's defense, it's often up to Saleaumua to absorb the blow and create an opportunity for a counterattack.

Cook said his team's defense was the surprise of the non-conference season. With great blocking and fine floor defense from the likes of Saleaumua and libero Jenae Dowling, the Huskers showed opposing hitters they haven't dropped off much from last year's stalwart unit.

"Our whole thing is to not let anything touch the court," said Saleaumua, who averaged 3.1 digs a game and led Nebraska in service aces with 30 last season.

Floor defense is more than just getting balls up. Nebraska has worked hard to transition off digs and produce kills, and the Huskers want to avoid digging balls across the net that turn into easy kills for the opposition.

"We rarely have overpasses, and that's a common thing we used to do," Saleaumua said.

Saleaumua credits new assistant coach Charlene Tagaloa for the improvements. Tagaloa brought along concepts from her time with the U.S. National Team, demanding that NU's defenders get into position to dig balls in front of them. Over and over in practice, you hear the words "punch" and "absorb."

By cushioning an attack, NU can likely get at least a swing off the dig and put the pressure back on the opponent. With a young team and less firepower than in past seasons, that kind of defense is key.

"When you instill in your team that you can do that every time out, then you're going to have a great defensive team," Cook said. "We stress that and work hard on it. There are very high expectations for how hard we play defense."

A finesse player offensively, Saleaumua has found success by using the opponent's block to her advantage and by showing up in spots the opponent isn't expecting.

But defense has long been her first love.

Asked Saleaumua: "How else are you going to kill a ball if you can't play defense?" ■

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ACROSS

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5 NU's defensive coordinator
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DOWN

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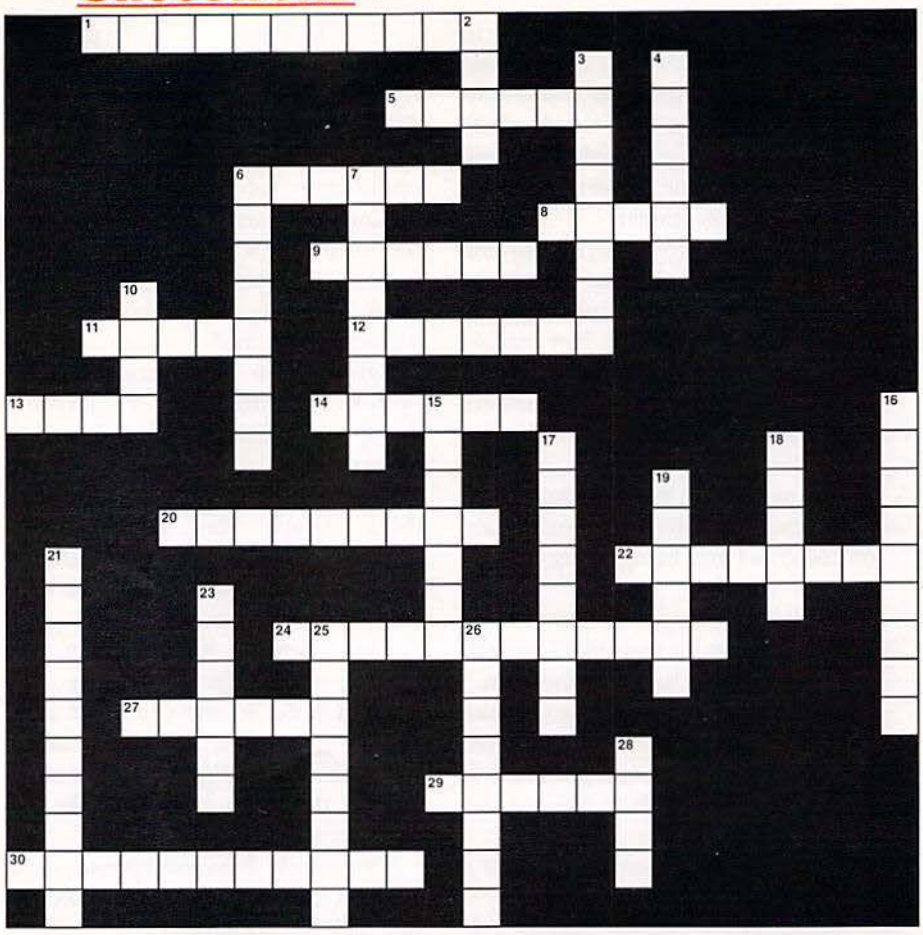
Answers in Oct. 4 issue



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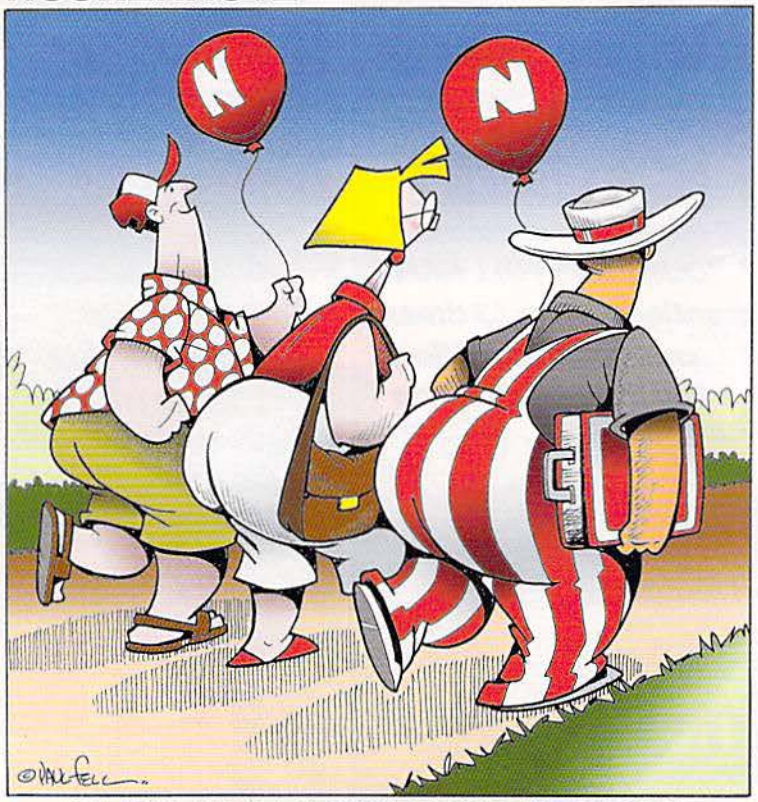

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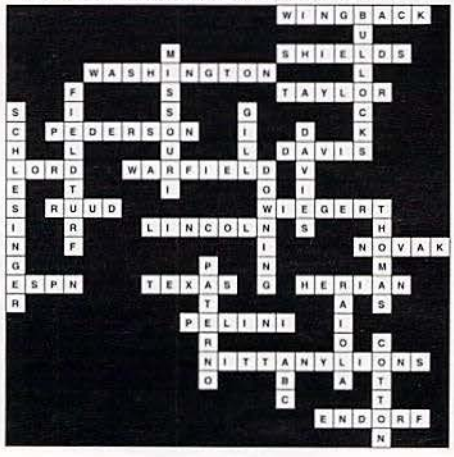

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Hard Work, Persistence

Davis says offensive line was responsible for his career-best rushing effort

Mike BABCOCK

IT WAS A STATISTICAL ODDITY: Josh Davis had 11 carries more than the entire Penn State team and only two fewer carries than he had, total, in Nebraska's first two games.

Plus, the senior I-back more than doubled his season rushing total.

"I thought he was a great warrior for us," Coach Frank Solich said following the Cornhuskers' 18-10 victory. "I thought he sliced through the holes with great quickness and great speed.

"He just finished runs off. Along with the offensive line, that is one reason we were able to get first down after first down running the ball . . . a combination of those two things."

Davis had a career night against Penn State, carrying 32 times for 179 yards. Seven of those carries came consecutively on Nebraska's 80-yard touchdown drive to start the second half. "That's typical of Josh," said offensive tackle Dan Vili Waldrop, "give him the ball and he'll work his magic."

Oh yes, he also returned six punts for 58 yards, with a long of 26.

Actually, what Vili Waldrop described as magic was really just the result of hard work.

Davis is an example of what can be accomplished with hard work and persistence. Realistically, he was a longshot to be the starting I-back. He had made his mark returning kickoffs, and he had carried only 25 times (34 during his career) as a back-up to Dahrran Diedrick and David Horne last season.

But the starting job was opened up for competition during spring and preseason practice. Horne held the top spot on the depth chart through the spring; Davis won it in the preseason.

"He came to training camp with a real professional, business-like attitude," offensive coordinator Barney Cotton said in announcing that Davis would start the opener against Oklahoma State.

"He's been no-nonsense. He reported in great shape. It looks like he's a step or two faster (than last season) and graded out best. From the coaches' standpoint, we felt he deserved the starting spot."

Davis definitely displayed those things against Penn State. He had the season's longest run from scrimmage, a 42-yarder that included not one but two blocks from wide receiver Ross Pilkington, and he held up physically, despite getting more carries than any Nebraska back since 2001.

Josh Davis carried 7 straight times on NU's touchdown drive.

Diedrick carried 32 times, for 133 yards, against Notre Dame.

The school record for carries in a game is 36, in case you're wondering, by Rick Berns against Missouri in 1978 and Lawrence Phillips against Iowa State in 1994.

Given the opportunity, Davis would have had the energy to break the record. "My body feels great, like I could go out and play another half," he said.

At 5-foot-11 and 200 pounds, he's not physically imposing. But he's "a really tough back," said offensive tackle Richie Incognito. "He gets those hard yards. He can do it all."

To hear Davis tell it, the offensive line was responsible for his impressive numbers against Penn State. "They should be up here talking," he told reporters in the South Stadium interview room.

"They deserve all the credit in the world tonight. It was a great team effort."

As best he could remember, he never carried 32 times in a game, even in high school, Davis said with a smile. "He had to wear down, but he kept himself in the game," said Solich.

Davis claimed he didn't wear down, and neither did those around him. "I feel like everybody's in great shape," he said. The Nittany Lions were "getting tired; we were getting stronger."

Horne provided a couple of breaks, and with 14 carries, wasn't exactly the forgotten man. But Davis was the one who would drive the offense against Penn State, a fact obvious from the opening series.

He carried on five of the first six plays from scrimmage and established how the Cornhuskers planned to attack. It was as if they had no intention of deceiving the defense. They just lined up and ran.

Davis reached 100 yards for the first time at Nebraska on his fourth carry of the second half, and his 12th of the game. He would carry six more times on the 80-yard touchdown drive.

"We knew we could run it right at them," he said.

Nebraska hadn't had a 100-yard rusher since last season's Kansas game, when Horne (122) and Diedrick (107) both gained more than 100. Davis ran for 95 yards against Oklahoma State.

The number wasn't as important as what it helped achieve, Davis said.

"A lot of people out there have no respect for this football team," he said.

"But we like where we're at."

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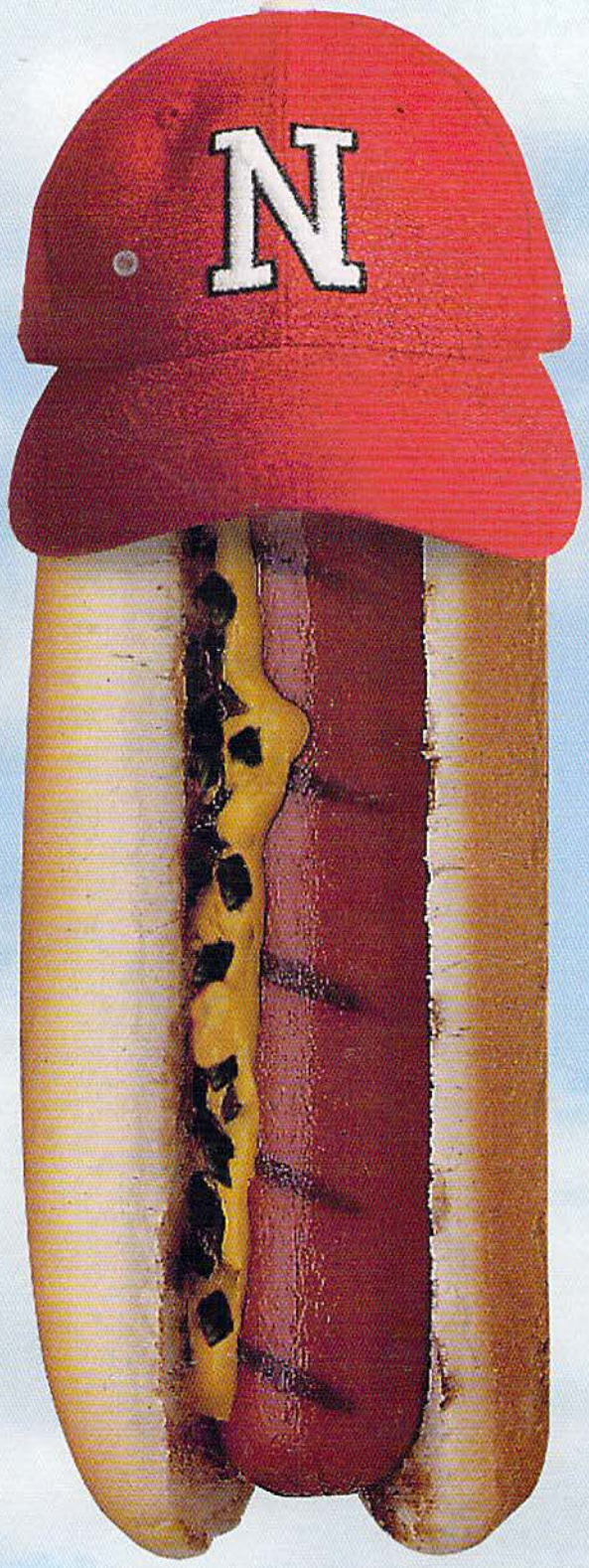

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